

THE  
LECTURES

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF INSTRUCTION,

AT

PORTLAND, AUGUST 30 & 31, 1844.

INCLUDING

THE JOURNAL OF PROCEEDINGS,

AND

A LIST OF THE OFFICERS.

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PUBLISHED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE BOARD OF CENSORS.

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## AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF INSTRUCTION.

### FIFTEENTH ANNUAL SESSION.

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#### Journal of Proceedings.

PORTLAND, *August 30, 1844.*

At 10 o'clock, the Institute was called to order by the President. Wm. B. Fowle was appointed a committee to report the doings of the Institute. The Secretary was added.

Messrs. G. F. Thayer, Peter Mackintosh, jr., D. P. Page, Charles Northend, and Charles Brooks, were appointed a committee of nomination. After a few introductory remarks by the President, prayer was offered by Rev. Dr. Nichols. This was followed by the Introductory Lecture, by Prof. C. E. Stowe, of Portland.

It was moved by Wm. B. Fowle, and seconded by G. F. Thayer, that 5000 copies of the address by Prof. Stowe be published for distribution.

Messrs. G. B. Emerson, G. F. Thayer and Samuel S. Greene, were appointed a committee to carry the above vote into effect. Adjourned, till 3 o'clock, P. M.

Met at 3 o'clock. The President renewed the invitation already given to teachers and all others to take part in the exercises, and urged them to do so by a few pertinent remarks.

The Institute listened to a lecture delivered by Allen H. Weld, "*On Classical Instruction.*"

After the lecture, an animated discussion arose on topics suggested by the lecture, but chiefly on "Modes

of teaching language." Messrs. O. Carlton, J. Whitman, Benj. Greenleaf, and Joseph Libby took part.

After a recess of 10 minutes, the Institute voted to defer the lecture to be given at half past 4 by Mr. Northend till evening, to make room for further discussion on Classical Instruction, which was continued by Messrs. John Neal, Calvin E. Stowe, and I. Nichols. Adjourned at 6 o'clock, to meet at half past 7, in the Court-house.

Met at half past 7, according to adjournment.

Listened to a lecture delivered by Charles Northend, on the "*Obstacles to the greater Success of Common Schools.*"

Remarks on the lecture were made by Messrs. J. Libby, Charles Brooks, C. E. Stowe, N. Dow, Wm. B. Fowle, H. Barnard, and J. Whitman.

Adjourned till Saturday morning at 9 o'clock.

Saturday, August 31, 1844. The Institute came to order at 9 o'clock. The nominating committee made their report, which was accepted, and at half past 2 o'clock this day, was assigned for the choice of officers for the ensuing year.

A lecture was delivered by Charles Brooks, "*On Natural History, as a Study in Schools.*"

Remarks on the lecture were offered by Messrs. B. Greenleaf, G. B. Emerson, C. E. Stowe, and I. Nichols.

At 11 o'clock, after a recess of 10 minutes, the Institute came to order, Mr. G. F. Thayer, Vice President, in the chair.

An invitation was announced by the chair from Mr. Charles Davies, President of the Portland Atheneum, to the members of the Institute, to visit the Atheneum on Saturday, or on Monday afternoon.

Mr. G. Vale then gave a lecture on the modes of illustrating Geography, Astronomy, and Spherical Trigonometry, with his apparatus. Adjourned till half past 2 P. M.

Met at half past 2 o'clock. Messrs. Wm. B. Fowle, Charles Northend, and Wm. D. Swan, were chosen a committee to collect and count the votes for officers who were now to be chosen.

This committee having performed their duty, reported the following list of officers chosen, which corresponds with the report of the nominating committee.

## PRESIDENT.

GEORGE B. EMERSON, Boston, Mass.

## VICE PRESIDENTS.

Daniel Kimball, Needham, Mass.  
Gideon F. Thayer, Boston, "  
Jacob Abbott, New York.  
Horace Mann, Boston, Mass.  
Peter Mackintosh, Jr., Boston, Mass.  
John Kingsbury, Providence, R. I.  
Elipha White, John's Island, S. C.  
Samuel Pettes, Boston, Mass.  
Nehemiah Cleveland, Brooklyn, N. Y.  
Denison Olmstead, New Haven, Conn.  
Benjamin Greenleaf, Bradford, Mass.  
John A. Shaw, New Orleans, La.  
Frederic Emerson, Boston, Mass.  
Stephen C. Phillips, Salem, "  
Cyrus Pierce, Newton, "  
Wm. Russell, Andover, "  
David Choate, Essex, "  
Wm. B. Fowle, Boston, "  
Cyrus Mason, New York.  
J. H. Agnew, Newark, N. J.  
Calvin E. Stowe, Walnut Hills, Ohio.  
Solomon Adams, Boston, Mass.  
Thomas Sherwin, " "  
Emery Washburn, Worcester, Mass.  
Henry Barnard, Hartford, Conn.  
David P. Page, Albany, N. Y.  
Daniel Leach, Roxbury, Mass.  
Jason Whitman, Portland, Me.  
Asa Cummings, "

## JOURNAL OF PROCEEDINGS.

## RECORDING SECRETARY.

Samuel S. Greene, Boston, Mass.

## CORRESPONDING SECRETARIES.

Charles Brooks, Boston, Mass.

Thomas Cushing, Jr.     "

## TREASURER.

Wm. D. Ticknor, Boston, Mass.

## CURATORS.

Josiah F. Bumstead, Boston.

Nathan Metcalf,     "

Wm. A. Shepard,     "

## CENSORS.

Charles K. Dillaway, Roxbury, Mass.

Wm. J. Adams, Boston,     "

Joseph Hale Abbott, Boston,     "

## COUNSELLORS.

Alfred Greenleaf, Brooklyn, New York.

Nathan Bishop, Providence, R. I.

Luther Robinson, Boston, Mass.

Oliver Carlton, Salem,     "

Thomas A. Green, New Bedford, Mass.

Abraham Andrews, Boston,     "

Samuel J. May, Lexington,     "

Roger S. Howard, Newburyport,     "

Wm. D. Swan, Boston,     "

Barnum Field,     "

Charles Northend, Salem, Mass.

Joseph Hale, Boston, Mass.

Mr. John Neal offered the following resolutions, which were ordered to be laid on the table.

Resolved, That the time now devoted to the dead languages as a part of collegiate education, may be better employed upon other subjects.

Resolved, That if it were otherwise, the present system of instruction is unwise, unphilosophical, and wasteful.

Mr. D. P. Galloup then gave a lecture. Subject, "*Dangers of Teachers.*"



Remarks were made on topics suggested by the lecture, by Messrs. C. Brooks, J. Libby, and H. Mann.

Rev. Jason Whitman requested liberty to secure the 1st Parish Church on Monday evening for the discussion of the topic, "Home preparation for schools." Granted. On motion, adjourned till half past 7 P. M.

Met at half past 7. On motion of Wm. B. Fowle, Voted, to print and distribute gratuitously, 2000 copies of the lecture delivered by Mr. Northend, and that 500 of the number be sent to Portland to be distributed under the direction of the school committee. Mr. Henry Barnard gave a lecture on "*The difficulties attending Common Schools, and their remedies.*"

A communication having been received from the Mayor of Portland, tendering the use of the City Hall to the Institute, it was voted to adjourn to meet again on Monday the 2d of Sept., at 9 o'clock, in the City Hall.

Monday, Sept. 2d. The Institute came to order at 9 o'clock. After sundry announcements and preliminary arrangements, a Lecture on "*School Discipline*" was given by Mr. Joseph Hale. After the lecture, remarks were offered by Mr. G. Vale. Also by Messrs. Brooks, Whitman, and Fowle.

At 11 1-4 o'clock, the remarks were suspended to make room for the next regular lecture by Mr. S. S. Greene.

Voted, that when the subject of Mr. Hale's lecture, "School Discipline," is resumed, each speaker shall be limited to 10 minutes, and shall not be allowed to speak a second time on the subject without special permission.

A lecture was delivered by Mr. S. S. Greene. Subject, "*Methods of Teaching to Read.*"

After a few remarks by Mr. J. Neal, adjourned till 3 o'clock, P. M.

At 3 o'clock, a lecture was delivered by Mr. Wm. Russell on "*Female Education.*" This lecture called

forth remarks from Messrs. G. B. Emerson, J. Neal, W. B. Fowle, and J. Whitman. After a recess of 5 minutes, voted to resume the subject of Mr. Hale's lecture.

Messrs. F. Emerson, Barnum Field, Amos Brown, O. Carlton, G. B. Emerson, Thomas Bradford, Horace Mann, and John Neal, took part in this discussion.

At 6 o'clock, adjourned till 7 1-2 o'clock, then to meet at the First Parish Church, to consider the subject of "Home preparation for schools."

Met at 7 1-2. It was decided by a vote of the Institute to continue the session to-morrow, to hear a lecture from Mr. H. Mann, at 10 o'clock, in place of the lecture expected from J. E. Murdock, who was unable to be present.

The subject for the evening being "Home preparation for schools," Mr. Mann commenced the discussion. After Mr. Mann had finished his remarks, it was voted, on motion of Mr. F. Emerson, to restrict the speakers on the subject to 15 minutes.

The discussion was continued by Messrs. G. F. Thayer, C. Brooks, W. D. Swan, and O. Carlton.

At this stage of the discussion, it was voted to suspend it, to hear remarks from a gentleman who was obliged to leave town in the morning.

Mr. J. Libby of Portland rose to express his obligations, as well as the obligations of many others, for the entertainment and instruction afforded by the lectures and discussions of the Institute.

Mr. F. Emerson resumed the subject under consideration for the evening.

Most of the speakers prefaced their addresses by some observations on corporal punishment, and being limited by a vote of the Institute to 15 minutes, had little time left, most of them not any, to speak of "Home preparation for schools."

Adjourned at 9 1-2 till 9 o'clock tomorrow morning, then to meet in the First Parish Church.

Tuesday, Sept. 3d, 9 o'clock. Mr. G. F. Thayer moved that the subject treated in Mr. Greene's lecture on teaching to read, be now discussed. The motion being accepted, the discussion was opened by Mr. Amos Brown, in opposition to the opinions advanced in the lecture. He was followed by the President on the same side.

10 o'clock, the hour for the lecture, having arrived, Mr. Wm. A. Shepard proposed that the discussion be continued, and proposed several questions. Mr. F. Emerson also proposed several questions. They were answered by the President.

At 10 o'clock, Mr. Mann gave the final lecture. Subject, "*The Necessity of Education in a Republican Government.*"

On motion of Mr. Charles Brooks, the thanks of the Institute were tendered to Mr. Mann, for his lecture gratuitously given to supply the failure of Mr. Murdock. Those in favor of the motion, it was proposed by the mover, should rise. The President declared the vote to be unanimous.

Mr. S. Adams then proposed to offer sundry resolutions before the final adjournment. He gave way for a short time to Messrs. Thomas Chadwick, Joseph Adams, Jason Whitman, and one of the school committee, whose name was not ascertained, to express for themselves and their fellow-citizens of Portland, their grateful acknowledgments to the Institute for the entertainment and salutary instruction imparted by the lectures and discussions of the Institute, during its session, which was now about to close.

After a few prefatory remarks, Mr. Adams then offered resolutions, which were unanimously adopted,—

That the thanks of the Institute be presented to the

gentlemen from whom we have received the course of instructive and interesting lectures of the present session. Also to the committee of arrangements, by whose agency the lecturers were secured and other duties performed.

Voted, That the thanks of the Institute be presented to Eliphalet Greely, Mayor of Portland, for opening the public halls of the city for the use of the Institute. Also to the School Committee, Teachers, and Citizens generally, for their kind attentions during the sessions of the Institute.

Also to the proprietors of the First Parish Church, for the use of their place of worship for lectures and discussions.

Also to the President of the Atheneum, and to the proprietors of the Reading Room, for opening them to the members of the Institute.

Also to the editors of the newspapers who have reported, or otherwise noticed in their publications the meetings and doings of the Institute.

Mr. H. Mann in the chair. It was moved by Mr. G. B. Emerson, that the thanks of the Institute be presented to the Directors of the Eastern Railroad, for liberally granting free seats in their cars to Portland and back, to the officers, members, lecturers, and other friends of the Institute, who passed over the road for the purpose of attending the Institute meetings. Passed unanimously.

A vote of thanks to the President, for the faithful and impartial manner in which he has discharged the duties of presiding officer during the session, was unanimously passed.

12 o'clock. Voted to adjourn, without day, after a session of 3 1-2 days, not inferior in interest, it is believed, to any session which the Institute has held.

S. S. GREENE, *Rec. Sec.*

LECTURE I.

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THE

RELIGIOUS ELEMENT

IN

EDUCATION.

---

BY CALVIN E. STOWE, D. D.,

---

IN every civilized community we observe striking diversities among individuals of the same nation, and even of the same parentage. In uncivilized communities these differences are far less observable. This single fact shows that such diversities, however great they may be, are much more the effect of education than of any original, constitutional difference made by the Creator.

Why is it that in all the towns of our own country, there are some men uncouth in manner, rough in speech, and brutish in thought, while others are refined in manners, easy in language, and of intelligent and elevated minds? Not generally because they were born different, but because the one class has been educated and the other



not. Why is one woman engaging in person, pure in thought, agreeable in manners, an object of affectionate pride to all who know her ; while another, born with a mental and physical constitution in all respects equal, is disgusting in person, impure in thought, licentious in manners, an object of mingled pity and abhorrence to all who behold her ? Because the one was reared in the bosom of a pious, pure-minded and virtuous family, the other was cast in early life among the very dregs of society, and exposed to all their increasing abominations. Look over the surface of society, and see the immense diversities that exist, and notice how few of them can be traced to constitutional differences, and how many to education ; and estimate if you can, the invaluable importance of a right education in early life. In many cases it is all, humanly speaking, that makes one man a benefactor of the human race, and another a drunkard or a thief ; all that makes one woman the pride and ornament of society, and another an outcast and a prostitute. Who of us can say, that if our early education had been like that of thousands of others, we should not now, instead of sitting here in this quiet and respectable assembly, surrounded with circumstances of comfort and respectability, have been wallowing in debauchery, the degraded inmates of a prison or a brothel ?

It is true that some break through the restraints of early habit, and become good and great in spite of a vicious or defective education ; and that others, notwithstanding the influence of an education apparently good, become vicious and perverse. But these examples, especially of the first class, are extremely rare and remarkable exceptions to the general rule ; and where they



do occur, there can generally be discovered, on close examination, some hidden cause that has produced the good,—some hidden defect that has occasioned the bad result.

Who, then, I say again, can estimate the unspeakable value of a right education,—the deplorable evils of a wrong one, since the whole existence of an intelligent, conscious, feeling, immortal soul, for time and for eternity, so essentially depend upon it?

It is true there are individual diversities of character and capacity, which no education can equalize or assimilate; but the whole difference which exists between classes is made by education, and by education it is perpetuated. Wherever there is a domineering class and a degraded class, wherever there is an intelligent class and an ignorant class, it is education and education alone that makes the difference. Reverse all the circumstances of the two, and in one generation, the domineering would become the degraded, and the degraded the domineering, the intelligent would become the ignorant, and the ignorant the intelligent class. So far as God is concerned, *He fashioneth their wants alike*; and there is the same regular distribution and apportionment of talent in the different classes of society, that there is of the sexes. It is not the arrangement of God, but the wickedness of man, that has kept, generation after generation, whole classes of human beings in a condition of hopeless barbarism and ignorance. How can we estimate the wickedness of this kind of oppression? When we see a well developed, vigorous, intelligent young man, or a graceful, accomplished, refined young woman, we involuntarily do them homage as among the noblest of God's

works ; and when we extend our view to eternity, and reflect that the spirits which animate those forms and gives them all their interest, will continue to exist and expand and become more and more interesting through all eternity, we are compelled to feel that one such young man, or one such young woman, is worth infinitely more than all the products of the earth besides. Why then, should not every child that is born into the world, and endowed by his Creator with an immortal spirit, have the opportunity to become such a man or woman ? What right has any one human being to prevent, or hinder any other human being from becoming as intelligent, as interesting, as lovely as his nature is capable of becoming ? What so profitable, so advantageous, so conducive to the prosperity of a community, as a continually increasing number of such men and women, from whatever class they may spring ? and what so profitless, so destructive, as men and women of the opposite character ? The necessity of labor creates no necessity for ignorance or degradation. The most industrious states of this Union are also by far, a hundred fold, the most intelligent, the most refined, the farthest advanced in everything which constitutes civilization. In point of general intelligence, compare Massachusetts with proud old Virginia, or any part of New England with imperious South Carolina. By the returns of the last census, the amount of ignorance among the free white men of South Carolina, whose labor is all performed by slaves, is forty-fold greater than it is among the free white men of Vermont who cultivate their own farms with their own hands and never talk big of nullification. In South Carolina, the proportion of free white persons over twenty years

of age who can neither write nor read, is one in seventeen, in Vermont it is one in 493! The necessity of hand labor, creates no necessity whatever, constitutes no excuse whatever, for the existence of an uneducated, brutified class of human beings; on the contrary, the existence of such a class in the bosom of any community, is a hinderance to all good, a fruitful source of every kind of evil.

The Bible, in several expressive texts, gives emphatic utterance to the true principle of all right education. For example, Prov. 9: 10. *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy is understanding.* Religion must be the basis of all right education, and an education without religion is an education for perdition. Religion, in its most general sense, is the union of the soul to its Creator; a union of sympathy, originating in affection and guided by intelligence. The word is derived from the Latin terms *re* and *ligo*, to *tie again*, or *reunite*. The soul, sundered from its God by sin, by grace is *reunited* to Him; and this is *religion*.

There is but one form of true religion on earth, revealed by God to man, and that is the form contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, commonly called the Christian religion. In regard to religious instruction, the question, at least throughout Christendom, plainly is between the Christian religion and no positive religion; for no one with whom we are concerned, will contend that any other system of positive religion ought to be taught in preference to the Christian.

It is my object in this lecture,

I. To exhibit some of the reasons why instruction in

the Christian religion should make an essential part of every system of education, whether in the family, the critical school, the high school, the university, or the professional seminary.

II. To answer some of the more plausible objections which are usually urged against such instruction ; and

III. To show how such instruction can be given faithfully and efficiently in our common schools and other public institutions, without violating any of the rights of conscience.

I. Why should instruction in the Christian religion make an essential part of every system of education,—whether in the family, the district school, the high school, the university, or the professional seminary ?

1. The nature of the mind requires it.

The mind is created and God is its Creator. Every mind is conscious to itself that it is not self-existent or independent ; but that its existence is a derived one, and its condition one of entire, uniform, unceasing dependence. This feeling is as truly a part of the essential constitution of the mind as the desire of food is of the body, and it never can be totally suppressed. If it ever seems to be annihilated, it is only for a very brief interval ; and any man who would persist in affirming himself to be self-existent and independent would be universally regarded as insane. The sympathy which attracts the sexes towards each other is not more universal nor generally stronger than that inward want which makes the whole human race feel the need of God ; and indeed the two feelings are in many respects so analogous to each other, that all ancient mysteries of mythology and the

Bible itself, have selected this sympathy as the most expressive, the most unvarying symbol of the relation between the soul and God.

Till men can be taught to live and be healthy and strong without food ; till some way is discovered in which the social state can be perpetuated and made happy with a total separation of the sexes ; till the time arrives when these things can be done,—we cannot expect to relieve the human mind from the necessity of having some kind of religious faith. This being the fact, a system of education, which excludes attention to this part of the mental constitution, is as essentially incomplete as a system of military tactics that has no reference to fighting battles, a system of mechanics which teaches nothing respecting machinery, a system of agriculture that has nothing to do with planting and harvesting, a system of astronomy which never alludes to the stars, a system of politics which gives no intimation on government ; or anything else which professes to be a system, and leaves out the very element most essential to our existence.

The history of all ages, of all nations, and of all communities is a continued illustration of this truth. Where did the nation ever exist untouched either by religion or superstition ? which never had either a theology or a mythology ? When you find a nation that subsists without food of some sort, then you may find a nation that subsists without religion of some sort, and never, never before. How unphilosophical, how absurd it is, then, to pretend that a system of education may be complete, and yet make no provision for this part of the mental constitution ! It is one of the grossest fooleries which the wickedness of man has ever led him to commit. But it

is not only unphilosophical and foolish, it is also exceedingly mischievous,—for where religion is withheld the mind inevitably falls to superstition ; as certainly as when wholesome food is withheld, the sufferer will seek to satisfy his cravings with the first deleterious substance which comes within his reach. The only remedy against superstition is sound religious instruction. The want exists in the soul. It is no factitious, no accidental or temporary want, but an essential part of our nature. It is an urgent, imperious want ; it must and will seek the means of satisfaction, and if the healthful supply be withheld, a noxious one will be substituted.

2. The condition of society requires it.

Every one knows that men are continually subject to impulses and passions, exceedingly dangerous and mischievous if not controlled and suppressed. Control and suppression can be effected only by one of two methods, namely, either by the energy of external force or the power of inward principle. The former is the method by which the mass of men have usually been controlled ; a method which has led to infinite abuse, and for ages the many have groaned under the irresponsible tyranny of the few. But a revolution, mighty, irreversible, irretrievable, has commenced—it cannot go back—it will go on to its consummation. The many will no longer be in subjection to the few, the masses feel their power and will exercise it ; the people swear with their millions of tongues and with their millions of eyes and millions of hands, that they are the sovereigns, and that as such they will be revered and obeyed. This revolution began in the Anglo-Saxon race, but with them it will not stop. It pervades every race and every clime, and is rapidly



undermining the best established and the best regulated thrones of the old world.

It is not long since I saw a letter from a gentleman of high standing in Berlin, the capital of Prussia, who is strenuously opposed to democracy and warmly attached to the monarchical system of his native land, in which he expresses himself to the following effect : " Some begin to clamor for a constitution. How foolish ! The character of our reigning sovereign is the best constitution. Compare the good order, the quiet, the security for life and property, the universal public instruction of the Prussian monarchy, with the disorders, the riots, the lynchings, the slavery, the popular ignorance, of the so-called constitutional states, and tell me what we can gain by the change. Yet the mania is so wide spread, so deep, that I have no hope we shall long escape ; and even Prussia, and that too at no distant period, must be afflicted with a democratic constitution."

Such testimony from such a man, in the capital of the best administered and most benevolent monarchy in existence, speaks volumes as to the present aspect of society in the world. The decree has gone forth. The people will free themselves from external, political restraints ; they will govern themselves, or they will not be governed at all. Now, what is the substitute when external power weakens its hold ? Nothing, nothing but inward principle ; and that principle, in order to be effective, must be religious principle.

Some rely for the security of society upon the principle of self-interest ; and it is true that an enlightened regard to self-interest in a society of equals does demand the security and good of the whole. Hence it is that

democratic governments, though in the hands of inferior and selfish men, often conduce more to the good of the people than aristocratic governments, even when controlled by superior and benevolent men. But are people generally governed by an enlightened regard to their own interests? Do they even know, in many cases, what these interests require? And admitting that they are acquainted with their own interests, and when calm always willing to be guided by them, how much are they controlled by such considerations in the hour of tumult, and excitement, and passion? In a government of law, it is notoriously for the interest of every good citizen, that the law should not be impeded in its regular operation; and every impediment thrown in the way of the regular operation of the law, is exceedingly hazardous both to the property and life of the citizens generally. Yet, what influence have these considerations in quelling the numerous riots which disgrace our land, some of which have been openly countenanced and abetted by men calling themselves respectable? To pass by more recent instances, what influence had such considerations on the mob in Kentucky, which called itself the people, and deliberately murdered two men uncondemned and untried by any form of law? And what was worse, their conduct was approved by many in the community; under the wretched plea that that was a case to which the law could not reach, and therefore *the people* did right to take it into their own hands! Now what enlightened regard do such men show either to their own interests or to moral principle? And what safety can there be in a community where such notions gain ascendancy? It is the easiest matter in the world for a few artful villains to get up an

excitement against any man, under pretence that he has been guilty of some offence which the law cannot reach ; and he too may be hung without trial, jury, or judge. The murder of the Vicksburg gamblers several years ago was a case of the same kind ; and that too, with burning indignation and irrepressible contempt I heard justified on the same miserable plea, by men who ought to hang their heads for shame all the days of their lives ! “ The people, *the people* (said they) had a right to take such fellows in hand, and supply the deficiencies of the law.” It is the most outrageous calumny on free institutions that can be conceived, the most tremendous satire on constitutional governments that can be uttered, to call such mobs *the people*, and such acts a supplying of the deficiencies of the law.

In a government of law there is no safety for any man but in a strict adherence to the principles and forms of law—and yet this notorious fact is not sufficient to hinder thousands in our country from violating all the principles of law themselves and justifying their violation in others. Passion is always stronger than reason ; religion, and religion only, can control it. What unprincipled wretch in a fit of rage was ever deterred from abusing his family, or beating his horse, or torturing his defenceless slave, by the consideration that it was not for his interest to do so ? What cares he for interest while flaming with anger ? Self-interest is no security at all against the influence of passion ; least of all against the passions of the multitude. It is only by religious principle that popular governments can be secured against the outbreaks of popular fury ; and he who discourages or opposes religious education, stands, as an enemy of free institutions, only next to him who countenances or justifies a mob.

Now, since all the world is so fast hastening towards the establishment of free institutions, since we see in the case of our own country the abuses and perils to which such institutions are liable from a want of religious principle among the people—who that has any benevolence, any desire for the good of the human race, but must earnestly wish to see religious institutions make a part of every system of education, from the elementary school to the professional seminary of the highest grade?

A government of equal rights, under the control of sound moral principle—this is the highest form of human society—the form in which every individual is an intelligent and self-governed man, capable of acting his own part in the machinery of life. Towards this the human race has been struggling from the earliest period of its history; and to this in our own country we had hoped soon to arrive. But unless we have a larger infusion of religious principle, it is a goal we shall never reach; and the revulsion whenever it comes, will be tremendous. Our institutions grew out of religious principle, from religious principle they took their form, by religious principle they have been thus far sustained, and in respect to them the checking of religious principle is like girdling the tree of the forest—stop the sap, and the tree is dead.

Shall the best hopes of man be annihilated, shall the human race be stopped in its onward career when so near the goal, and thrown back on despotism and barbarism, by our recreancy to religious principle?

3. The religion of the Bible is worthy of such a place in every system of education.

This would be true if all claim to divine inspiration

were abandoned. The peculiar character of the book, its antiquity, the influence which it has exerted, and which it still exerts, the place which it holds in the history of civilization, the part which it has had in the education of the human race, are enough of themselves to make it the most important and interesting educational book in existence ; and no system of education can be regarded as complete, even in a secular and scientific point of view, unless it includes a thorough study of the religion of the Bible. Almost all the education which exists, or ever has existed, among the people at large, has come to them through the Bible. Scotland and New England and Germany, the countries where the Bible is the book of the people, are the countries in which the common school system originated, and where it has been perpetuated. Besides, what learning in the history of man, what knowledge of human nature, what ethics, what poetry, what eloquence, we find in the pages of the Bible ! And all this expressed in a form so admirably adapted to interest and improve the young and opening mind ! He who rejects the Bible from a system of education rejects the very best means which the whole circle of literature affords for the establishment of his work.

4. Human life without religion is so utterly empty and worthless.

If this life be the whole of our existence, we may well say : *Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.* There is not enough of this life alone to afford to any reflecting man a sufficient motive for exertion ; and every great mind which sets itself to make effort with views confined to this world, is always obliged to go beyond the limits

of the present life for motives, and maintain itself by the delusive dream of posthumous fame. And how can any mind, elevated at all above the animal, be satisfied with what this life can afford? What is it? Or how long can it be enjoyed? Or what certainty is there of attaining it, even such as it is?

What is that which this life alone can give? A mere momentary gratification, like that which the drunkard feels while swallowing the intoxicating draught, succeeded by feverish restlessness and indescribable misery. Man was made for eternity, and time is not his element.

How long can it be enjoyed? We cannot be assured of it even while life lasts—and if we could, what is our life? *It is even as a vapor which appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.*

What certainty is there of obtaining it, even such as it is? of the thousands who devote themselves to this world, scarcely one in a thousand ever obtains the object of his pursuit; and every one that does obtain it, is disappointed after he has it within his grasp.

A striking and melancholy proof was not long ago exhibited to us of the vanity of this life. We saw General Harrison, in the flush of health and hope, leave our shores at Cincinnati, amid the acclamations of a grateful and sympathizing people, to take the station most coveted by ambition, and conferred on him in the manner most flattering to every feeling of personal vanity. He had spent a long life of hard service. The peculiar circumstances of his early career, the people among whom he was thrown, the great simplicity, disinterestedness and energy of his character, were all most favorable to the elevation which he attained. After many years of ob-



scurity and despondency, a combination of favoring influences, such as rarely occurs once in the course of centuries, gave him the reward which his services and character deserved, and elevated him with unprecedented unanimity to the highest post in the gift of the people. But immediately on his entering the capitol, death follows him and tears him away, and he is brought back to us a lifeless corpse ; and the same landing, which a few weeks before had resounded with acclamations at the sound of his living voice, now witnesses the same dense crowd in silence and in sorrow, attending his lifeless form to the lonely tomb.

George IV. of England possessed the most magnificent, the most coveted throne on earth. He seemed to think himself exempt from all law, human and divine ; whatever he pleased to do, that was right to him. But nature regarded not his regal pride ; his debaucheries brought disease as if he had been but a vulgar laborer ; and when in his weakness and distress he asked his attendants to move him, he felt a change coming over him which he could not control, and in alarm he cried : "Ah, what is this—this is not right—oh, this is DEATH!" and expired.

The late queen of Prussia had all for this world that a human being could possess. Beautiful, accomplished, the object of universal admiration for her personal qualities, united in the most intimate bonds with a sovereign who made her his idol, surrounded by obedient and interesting children, beloved by a grateful people, in the enjoyment of every thing which a throne could give,—she too must experience the utter emptiness and vanity of the world ; she too must sink under an accumulation of

sorrows so great, that the last words she uttered, were : "O God, forsake me not ; O Jesus, shorten my sufferings"—just such a prayer, and for just such a purpose, as any poor slave might utter while writhing under the agonies of torture.

Such is the world ; incidents of this sort are continually occurring in it ; and what can any deeply reflecting mind consider the world good for without religion ? what motive to such a mind for effort without a hope in eternity ?

II. We proceed now, as was proposed, to answer some of the more plausible objections which are usually urged against religious instruction in a system of general education.

1. It prejudices the mind, and closes it against the free admission of truth.

This objection is of force in respect to wrong instruction, but certainly it is of no avail against that which is right, for right instruction is truth. Now it is not wrong religious instruction which we advocate, but that and that only which is right.

But this, the objector contends, does not fairly represent his meaning ; his idea is, that amid the variety of conflicting opinions which exist in the world, the mind should be left free, without prejudice against or in favor of any, to choose unbiassed for itself, when its powers shall have become fully developed, and it shall have capacity to make an intelligent choice. I will remark in passing, that it is no privilege so much to be coveted to choose falsehood and error even with a fully developed mind. If the objection refers merely to the external

form of religion, it is not of very great importance any way ; but if it refer to the inward surface, the essential element of religion, it rests on a view of the human mind which is entirely erroneous, which has no foundation whatever in nature. It supposes that if the mind be left uninstructed on a particular point, it will on that point have no prepossessions. This may be true in respect to subjects in which the mind has no constitutional interest, and of which it never thinks till they are brought to it from without ; but it is not true in respect to a topic in which the mind feels an interest from its very nature, and which it will think of, whether brought to it from without or not. I once knew an old man who insisted that there was no need of eating ; it was, as he expressed it, "only a sort of a notion that people had got into, and they might as well be rid of it as not." So some people seem to think, and with equal reason, in respect to religion. Religion is a part of this human institution ; the wants on which it is founded are intrinsic, within the mind itself, and we are not brought into it from without. Accordingly, the mind, whether instructed or not, will have its religious impulses and reflections ; and if these are not absorbed and guided by sound instruction, they would grow rank and wild and prepossess the soul, and that too in the worst manner possible. The soil that is left uncultivated, will be overgrown with weeds and brambles. This is seen abundantly in the monstrosities which everywhere grow up in the unoccupied pagan mind as respects religion ; and leave every active, fertile intellect in Christian lands untaught, and it will have a false religion of spontaneous growth. The poet Goethe when a child had very little religious instruction ; but his

mind felt the want, and when not more than ten years of age, he took it into his head to worship the sun, and erected a little altar in his chamber window, on which at the first ray of dawn he burned incense with intense delight. Every mind is not so active or so fertile, but every mind feels the same want in a greater or less degree, and will contrive means to gratify it according to its powers.

Besides, in every state of society, people will talk on the subject of religion, books will be written on theological topics, children will hear some of this conversation and read some of the books, and thus their minds become in some degree prepossessed, without the advantage of system and completeness. The only alternative is to sow the field well, to cultivate it, and keep out the weeds, so as to secure a good crop—or leave it to the chance seeds which may fall to grow up with weeds and come to no good. The only way to prevent prejudice and prepossession, to leave the mind free to choose and give it the power of intelligent choice, is to imbue it early with the right kind of religious instruction.

2. Sects in this country are so numerous and diverse, that religious instruction cannot be given in public institutions without violating the rights of conscience.

The parent undoubtedly has the right to control the religious education of his child, and he is responsible to God for the manner in which he exercises the right. If a parent objects to the religious instruction of any institution, he has a right to take his child away from it, or require that he be excused from the religious exercises. But where religious instruction is judiciously given, this right will not be asserted by one parent in a thousand,

even of those who are violently sectarian, or destitute of all religion.

A man who has no conscience, certainly has no right of conscience to be violated ; and a man who has a conscience has necessarily some religious principle ; and notwithstanding the infinite diversity of forms which religion assumes, the principle of true religion is under all forms essentially the same. If one can detect, explain, and illustrate this principle in its unsullied purity, it will recommend itself alike to every man who really has a conscience, to every heart that has sympathy with religious principle, whatever may be the external form in which that sympathy usually manifests itself to observation.

Religion, if one has it, generally manifests itself in some individual form ; but there is such a thing as religious principle abstracted from all form ; there is such a thing as the science of anatomy, in which every idea that is expressed applies, not to any particular individual of the human race exclusively, but to the whole race generally ; and the anatomical subject which lies on the dissecting table can be completely described in all its bones and muscles and tendons and nerves and arteries and veins, without saying a word which is applicable exclusively to that particular subject, and not to the whole human race collectively. Yet not one of the principles ever existed in life, not one bone or muscle was ever put in motion, except in the case of some individual, who was distinguished from all others by his own identity and idiosyncrasies ; and that very subject which lies on the dissecting table is not mankind in general, but it is the body of some particular person, who had his own name, and his own character, and his own personal peculiarities,

which distinguished him from all others and made him different from everybody else. After this illustration I hope I shall not be misunderstood when I say, that though religion in real life and as applied to practice must always exist in the character ; yet as an object of contemplation, and as matter of instruction, there may be religion in the abstract.

It would be very easy in a lecture on anatomy, to go beyond the general truths and come to the individual peculiarities, to describe not the human anatomy generally and in the abstract, but the person of John or Peter or Sarah, or whatever individual the body on the dissecting table might have belonged to ; but this is not the object of the lecture, and it is not done. The intelligent anatomist has no difficulty in drawing the line between the personal and the general ; the former lies mostly on the surface, the latter comprehends the whole essential structure. He may first describe what belongs to the whole race as a race ; he may go further and describe the peculiarities of the two great divisions of the race by sex ; still further, to particular portions of the race, as black and white ; and so on till he comes to individual persons ; and all this without the least danger in any case of confounding the boundaries between any two of the divisions.

So in religious teaching, instruction may be confined to the great principles, which are always the same in all forms of true religion, though it may be that not one of those principles was ever active except under some particular form ; or the teacher may go into the three great leading divisions, the Patriarchal, the Mosaic, and the Christian ; or he may be still more minute, and divide



the Christian church into the Greek, the Romish, and the Protestant ; or more minutely still, he may speak of Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists ; and with still greater minuteness, he may talk of high church and low church, old school and new school, regular and radical, down even to the most microscopic sectarianism ; and without the least danger, if he understands himself, of confounding the boundaries between any two of the divisions. Notwithstanding, then, all the diversities of sect, there is still left open for religious instruction, a wide field which need not touch on those diversities.

3. It is difficult to draw the line between sectarian and general religious instruction.

The remarks already made, are enough to prove that the practical difficulty is not an insuperable one. The line must be drawn by the direction and good principle of the teacher. A little, mean, sectarian mind, will always run into sectarianism, whatever lines you may draw in theory ; while a man of magnanimous and expansive mind, whatever latitude be allowed him, while he professes to be guided by general principles, and to teach in such a way that different sects may safely trust their children to his charge, will never make his religious instructions sectarian.

Some people make a wonderful business of drawing lines, as if nothing must ever be attempted unless a suitable gird line can be accurately drawn beforehand to define its boundaries with exactness ; so that all on the one side shall be exactly right and all on the other entirely wrong. But this in practice is what can never be done ; there is always something left for reasoning and the exercise of judgment. Who ever pretended to draw the line

between murder and manslaughter so accurately that nothing need be left to the discretion of judge or jury? What is the fixed line in law between *compos* and *non compos mentis* which precludes the necessity of discretionary power? In cases where the line is necessarily definite, it is always so at the expense of metaphysical truth. The law declares a man of age at 21, because it is necessary to have a fixed line, and this is the one most generally convenient, though it is notorious that some men are better able to take care of themselves at 15 than others are at 25. How easy, on the principle of the objection we are considering, to raise a clamor against the law, and exclaim, "How can you draw the line? Will you say that the man who is twenty years of age, 364 days, 11 hours, and 59 minutes old, is not capable of taking care of himself, but if he lives one minute longer he is capable? Was he not as capable two minutes before the time as two minutes after?" Does any one think the less of the propriety and necessity of the law in consequence of such an objection?

A man offers to sell a piece of land for a thousand dollars, and one of these sagacious line-drawers wonders why he is not willing to sell it for 999 dollars, 99 cents, and 9 mills! He wonders what reason he has for drawing the line just there, rather than a little way on the right hand or on the left! Truly these men, who would draw lines so accurately, must be wonderful men!

The general principle, not at all difficult of apprehension, can be clearly stated; and the application of this principle to particular cases, must be left to the sound discretion and honest-heartedness of the teachers and managers of the schools.

III. We are now prepared for our third inquiry, to wit, how can religious instruction be faithfully and efficiently given in our common schools and other public institutions, without violating the rights of conscience ?

In order to accomplish this most desirable end, three things must be done. 1. There must be excited in the community generally a whole-hearted honesty and enlightened sincerity in the cause of education. 2. The Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible, without note or comment, must be taken as the text-book of religious instruction. 3. Instruction in those points which divide the sects from each other, must be confined to the family and the Sunday school.

A few remarks illustrative of these several points will close the present discussion.

Of the seventeen or eighteen millions who compose our population, not half a million pretend to have any serious objection to the Christian religion as exhibited in the New Testament. Of the thousands of youth in the process of education, not one in a thousand has really any objections which appear rational to himself against Christian instruction. If there be, then, generally in the community a whole-hearted honesty and enlightened sincerity in the cause of education, it cannot be impracticable to devise some method of Christian instruction which shall be very generally acceptable. It is true there are difficulties, but those difficulties ought not to be regarded as insurmountable.

The progress of society has created a new exigency which must be provided for, has opened new ground which must be occupied. Generally in the world's history there has been but little of individual freedom or in-

dividual thought on the subject of religion, and consequently but little of individual peculiarity. Religion has been generally a national affair, and men instead of reasoning and deciding for themselves, have believed according to law. In most of the countries of Europe, in consequence of the restraints upon religious liberty, the sects are still very few ; and when you have provided for Papists, Protestants, and Jews, you have no further trouble. But in this country, in consequence of our unbounded religious freedom, the subdivisions of sect are almost innumerable ; it is impossible in a system of public instruction to provide for them all ; and unless religious instruction can be given without sectarianism, it must be abandoned.

In this country the rights of all sects are the same, and any denomination that would have its own rights respected, must respect the rights of others.

The time which can be devoted to religious instruction in schools is necessarily very limited ; and if there be an honest and sincere desire to do right, the whole of this time certainly can be occupied, with efficiency and profit, without encroaching on the conscience of any sect which really has a conscience.

These are facts which show plainly, that notwithstanding the diversity of sects, there is common ground, on which the sincerely pious of all sects substantially agree. For example, the most acceptable books of practical piety, which even now are oftenest read by Christians of all denominations, have proceeded from about all the different sects into which Christendom is divided, and are read by all with scarcely a recognition of the difference of sect. Such are the writings of Thomas a Kempis and

Fenelon, who were Roman Catholics ; of Jeremy Taylor and Bishop Hall, who were churchmen ; of Baxter, Watts and Doddridge, who were Presbyterians or Congregationalists ; of Bunyan and Andrew Fuller, who were Baptists ; of Fletcher and Charles Wesley, who were Methodists. This fact alone shows that there is common ground, and enough of it too to employ all the time which can properly be devoted to religious instruction in our public institutions.

Yet, practically, there may be serious difficulty in leaving it to the intelligence and discretion of the teacher to select and occupy this common ground ; it may be difficult to find a sufficient number of well qualified religious teachers, and religious instruction given by an irreligious man, may be not only useless but in some cases positively pernicious ; and it may not be possible to contrive a text-book of religious instruction which shall be acceptable to all.

Happily, for all these practical difficulties there is a remedy, which requires nothing more than real honesty and a hearty zeal in the cause for its successful application.

All Christian sects without exception recognize the Bible as the text-book of their religion. They all acknowledge it to be a book given of God, and replete with the most excellent sentiments, moral and religious. None will admit that it is unfavorable to their peculiar views, but on the contrary all pretend that it promotes them. To the use of the Bible, then, as the text-book of religious instruction in our schools, there can be no serious objection on the part of Christians of any sect ; and even unbelievers very generally admit it to be a very good and useful book.

But shall it be the whole Bible ? or only the New Testament ? or selections made from one or both ?

A book of mere selection would be very apt to awaken jealousy ; and the exclusion of any part of the Scriptures would to my mind be painful. Let every scholar, then, have a whole Bible. The book can now be obtained so cheap that the expense can be no objection.

How can the teacher instruct in the Bible without coming on to sectarian ground ? He can teach a great deal in regard to its geography and antiquities ; and can largely illustrate its narrations, and its moral, rhetorical, and even religious beauties. An honest, intelligent teacher can find in this way abundant employment for all his time, if he be himself a lover and student of the Bible, without ever passing into sectarian peculiarities, or giving any reasonable ground of offence.

But apart from all this, the chief business of instruction in this department may be the committing to memory of portions of the divine Word. The most rigidly orthodox will not object to this, for they believe every portion of the Bible to be the *word of God which liveth and abideth for ever*, and that *all scripture is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness* ; and the liberal, though they may not sympathize in the high orthodox view of the divine excellency of the word, yet regard it as on the whole the best of books, and the more of it their children have treasured up in their minds, the better it must be for them. If the parent chooses, he can always himself select the portions to be committed by his child, or he may leave it to the discretion of the teacher, or he may give general directions, as selections from the Gospels, the Proverbs, the Psalms, etc. It is



not at all essential that all the children of the same school, or even of the same class, should recite the same passages. Each child may be called upon in turn to recite what each one has committed, and the recitation may or may not be accompanied by remarks from the teacher, as circumstances may seem to justify or require. In some such way all the time which can properly be devoted to this subject, may be most profitably and efficiently occupied ; and surely no reasonable parent will ever object to having his child's mind richly stored with scriptural truth expressed in scriptural language.

But there is another difficulty. The Roman Catholics, it is said, do not desire that their children should be instructed in the Scriptures ; they receive the apocryphal books as a part of scripture, and contend that we have not the whole Bible unless we include the apocrypha ; and they object to our common English translation.

In reply to this, I remark, in the first place, there are many parts of our land where there are no Roman Catholics, and of course the difficulty will not occur in those places.

Secondly, if Roman Catholics choose to exclude their children from a knowledge of the Bible, they have perfectly a legal right to do so, and we have no legal right to prevent it ; nor should we desire any such legal right, for the moment we desire any such legal right, we abandon the Protestant principle and adopt the Papal. Catholic parents are perfectly competent to demand that their children should be excused from the Bible recitation, and this demand, if made, should be complied with ; but they have no right to demand that the Bible should be withheld from the schools because they do not like it,

nor do their objections render it necessary or excusable for Protestants to discard the Bible from schools.

Again, if Roman Catholics desire that *their* children take *their* Bibles into the schools, and recite from them, by all means let them do so ; and so of Jews, let them recite from the Old Testament, if they choose, to the exclusion of the New. We allow to others equal rights with ourselves ; but we claim for ourselves, and shall insist upon having, equal rights with all. I am perfectly willing to give to the Roman Catholics all they can justly claim, but I am not willing to encroach on any one's rights, or the rights of any Protestant denomination for the sake of accommodating the Roman Catholics. Nor do I suppose that the Romanists have a claim to any special accommodation, for they have never yet manifested any particular disposition to accommodate others. Let them have the same privileges that our Protestant sects have—that is enough ; and they have no right to demand, our legislators have no right to grant, any more ; and we Protestants will be perfectly satisfied when Protestants can enjoy as great privileges in Italy as Roman Catholics now enjoy in the United States. In judicious practice I am persuaded there will seldom be any great difficulty ; especially if there be excited generally in the community any thing like a whole hearted honesty and enlightened sincerity in the cause of public instruction.

It is all right for people to suit their own taste and convictions in respect to sect ; and by fair means and at proper times, to teach their children and those under their influence to prefer the denominations which they prefer ; but further than this no one has any right to go.

It is all wrong to hazard the well being of the soul, to jeopardize great public interests, for the sake of advancing the interests of a sect. People must learn to practise some self-denial, on Christian principles, in respect to their denominational preferences, as well as in respect to other things, before pure religion can ever gain a complete victory over every form of human selfishness.

Happily there are places where religious instruction that is purely denominational can be freely given, so that there is no need whatever of introducing it into our public schools. The family and the Sunday school are the appropriate places for such instruction ; and there let each denomination train its own children in its own peculiar way, with none to molest or to find fault. It is their right, it is their duty.

As to the objection, that the use of the Bible in schools makes it too common and subjects it to contempt, as well might it be objected that the sun becomes contemptible because he shines every day and illumines the beggar's hovel as well as the bishop's palace. Where is the Bible most respected, in Scotland and New England, or in Italy and Austria ? The works of man, the robed monarch, may make themselves contemptible by being too often seen ; but never the works of God, or the true God-man. The children may and ought to be taught to treat the book with all possible reverence, and to preserve it as nice and unsullied as the Catholic preserves his crucifix ; and in this way, I am sure, on all the principles of human nature with which I am acquainted, that the Bible can be no more likely to suffer from the habit of daily familiarity than the crucifix.

Let no one say, that the religious instruction here

proposed for schools, is jejune and unprofitable. I do not so view the words of God. In any view, if the child faithfully commit to memory so much as the single Gospel of Matthew, or the first twenty-five Psalms, or the first ten chapters of Proverbs, or the first half of the book of Genesis, those divine sentences will be in his mind forever after, ready to be called up to check him when any temptation assails his heart, to cheer him when any sorrow oppresses his soul, to be a lamp to his feet and a light to his path; to be in all respects of more real and permanent value to him than any creed, or catechism, or system of theology, or rule of ethics, of merely human origin, ever can be.

Why should we prevent so great a good by claiming what we have no right to claim? Are we not willing to trust the word of God to cut its own way? Or can we claim to be Christians at all, while we consent to have the word of God and all Christian teaching banished from our institutions of public instruction? Let not infidel coldness, jesuitical intolerance, or sectarian jealousy, rob our schools of their greatest ornament and most precious treasure, the Bible of our fathers. Let not denominational feeling so far prevail as to lead us to destroy the greater good while attempting to secure the less—as has so often been done in the Christian world heretofore. We are willing to give up much for the sake of peace and united effort; but the Bible, the word of God, the palladium of our freedom, the foundation of all our most precious hopes, we never can, we never will give up. Let all who love the Bible unite to defend it, to hold on upon it forever.

Matthias Claudius, a townsman of the astronomer

Tycho Brahe, represents the state of the Christian world by the following significant allegory.

There was once a sovereign whose subjects by their own folly lost their freedom, and were shut up in a doleful prison in a foreign land. His heart was moved by their sorrows and he determined to release them. The prison was built very strong, the doors were locked, and no one had the key. The prince, with great self-denial, labor and trouble, went on foot and in disguise to the country where they were, bound the jailer hand and foot, made a key for the door which he was obliged to temper in his own blood, handed it to the prisoners through the grate, and told them to unlock the door and come out ; for the lock was so contrived that it could be unlocked only on the inside.

But they took the key and sat down, and began to look at it and to talk about it, and to wonder what it was made of ; and not agreeing in their conjectures, they fell to disputing ; and instead of opening the door, they began to beat each other with the key. In vain did the prince cry to them from without that the time was short and the danger pressing ; that the key was made to unlock the door with ; and if they would apply it to its proper use they would find that it would answer the purpose for them all equally well, however they might differ as to the material of which it was made, or the form which it bore.

Still they went on disputing till some took the jail fever and died in prison, and others grew so stiff and feeble with their long confinement that they were no longer capable of moving, even if the door were opened—(yet some of these felt exceedingly proud and self-satisfied, because they were sure that they knew what the key was

made of and how it was finished,)—and many who really desired to get out could not get hold of the key because the disputants held it up out of their reach.

And thus, though all might have escaped if they had obeyed the voice of the prince at first, it was a long while before the door was opened, and then but a feeble and halting remnant made their way back to their native land.



## LECTURE II.

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# FEMALE EDUCATION.

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BY WILLIAM RUSSELL.

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THE appropriate education of the female sex is a subject of such extent, that it is impossible to do justice, even to its outline, within the compass of a lecture. It is one, moreover, on which so much has been said and written, that, in treating of it, a lecturer can promise little new, either in fact or in thought. A few plain remarks and practical suggestions, therefore, are all that are now proposed ; and these, though quite inadequate to a theme of such moment, will, it is hoped, be received in consideration not of their own value, but rather of the subject itself. The education of females is a topic always so important to human well-being, that it demands revision, at every new stage of man's intellectual and social progress. It claims, therefore, fresh contributions of expe-

rience and opinion, from every successive race of teachers, and from every individual employed in the labor of instruction, how humble soever be his task in the wide field of education.

To aid us in forming just conceptions of the duties devolved on teachers of the present day, in reference to the education of females, it may be useful to inquire what was accomplished, in this sphere of intellectual action, by those from whose hands *we* received the important charge which we are, in turn, to transmit to others. Thus may we best satisfy ourselves, as regards the reasonable and just expectations with which our successors shall look to us, when we shall devolve on them the task of aiding human progress, as dependent on the ministrations of the female sex.

Historians, in our times, are not unjustly accused of claiming, for whatever period each happens to select for investigation, the dignity of "an era of transition,"—a time when mankind are emerging from some stupendous superincumbent evil of the past, and struggling into the freer element of a new life. Whoever should write the history of female education, in this country, from the date of the American revolution to the end of the first quarter of the present century, would be in great danger of incurring the charge of magnifying his office, and exaggerating his subject, by arrogating for the era of his researches, all the importance of a transition period; and he would substantiate his assertions by referring to the fact that, at the commencement of his era, he found the daughters of the land universally addicted to habits of

sewing, knitting, spinning, and the details of practical housewifery, but little versed in arithmetic, beyond the ground rules, not over curious in chirography, unprepared for any very nice scrutiny in orthography, profoundly ignorant of many modern sciences ; possessing, however, the full benefit of healthy activity, clear heads, warm hearts, sound sense, practical and efficient habits ; and,—as the fruit of reading and personal study,—a useful knowledge of the principal events and prominent characters of history, together with a distinct remembrance, and a just appreciation, of a few of the best authors in their own language.

Our historian of female education, would point you, on the other hand, to the close of his era, and show you our village school girls, each with her armful of books, her compendious treatises of science made short, (if not easy,) and her little cabinet-box of apparatus or of specimens. He would point you, in our country towns, to huge edifices righteously denominated female academies,—where girls who have the courage and the perseverance, may learn Greek and Latin and mathematics,—without show or sham, but by hard work, and in good earnest, and with the aid of masters and preceptresses of the highest education and the amplest abilities. In our cities, he would show you our daughters discarding housework and the spinning wheel, for the practice of calisthenics, frequenting the lessons of European professors in music and painting, learning the modern languages of natives of their respective countries, in addition to long years of application to Latin ; and, in many instances, he would display to you extensive arrangements for instruction in numerous branches of physical science,—the mere

catalogue of which you would wish to be excused from hearing.

Might not, then, the supposed historian justly assert his era to be one of transition, and struggle, and liberation, and, in the spirit of personification, point to the psyche fluttering, on gay wing, over the blossoms of universal knowledge, and remind you of its humbler primitive condition ?

Are *we*, too, exhibiting the phases of an era of transition ? Let us believe we are,—finding our way back from the air-built palace of universal attainment—whither ? Who can say that he sees a definite aim or end, in our movement ? Who feels competent to define one ? Our dissatisfaction with the past is strong enough : our complaints against it are loud enough. But while we ridicule, alike, the servile devotion to housewifery, which converts woman into a voluntary drudge, and the insane rage for illimitable learning and encyclopedic knowledge, which severs the female heart from actual life and practical duty, where shall we draw the line which separates household duties from household drudgery, where that which, including extensive acquirements, excludes unprofitable incumbrances ? Here, as elsewhere, the life and the position of the individual, must be taken into the account, ere we can safely lay down a principle of judgment or of taste. Acquisitions which, for one sphere of life may be redundant, may prove scanty for another.

It may be worth while, however, to inquire whether, as regards the education of woman, in all or in most of its forms established among us, there are not general defects which attention and care might obviate. May not instruction, in female schools of every description, re-

ceive modifications which shall prove more conducive than our present measures, to the appropriate formation of female character ?

One prevalent defect in the education of females, is that the cultivation of *health* does not form an express part of it. Look in what direction we may, from the humblest elementary schools, to the most expensive boarding establishments, from the district school in the country, poorly provided, perhaps, with shade from the summer's sun, or warmth during winter's cold, to the ill-ventilated and over-crowded school-rooms of our cities, or pass, if you will, to the luxurious apartments of wealth, where the young lady receives her lessons at home, from a tutor or a governess ;—still you perceive no proof that human culture is thought to embrace the cherishing and invigorating of health, as one of its prime objects.

Health, the great natural source of happiness, the life-spring of action, the element without which heart, soul, and character, as well as nerve and muscle, become morbid,—the divinely appointed element, without whose support the great light of reason wavers, or ultimately goes out, “in obscure darkness,”—health, the genial influence, destitute of whose aid, the mother infuses into her infant, along with nature's aliment, its surest bane,—health, the second soul of life, is not yet recognised as one of the highest ends and best results of education. The greater,—far the greater,—and always the most genial, part of the day, is too generally assigned to close, sedentary application, and the scraps and odd ends of time, are too commonly considered sufficient for the free air, and the invigorating exercise, without which life is

doomed to pine. Where yet do we find parents and teachers agreeing to assign, in the arrangement of education, the chief place, and the chief time, to the chief requisite of human well-being ?

We read much, and we talk much, it is true, about the value of health ; and even our daughters are studying books on hygiene. In some of our schools we shall find ten minutes', or, perhaps, half an hour's attention to calisthenic exercise, prescribed as a requirement. Some parents, in our own cities, are even so far awake to the importance of doing something for the health of their children, during the decisive period of education, as to send their daughters to a calisthenic school, for two whole afternoons in the week. All such measures, however, are but apologetic : they do not, and they never can, accomplish the great purpose of infusing health into life, as a habit, as an influence whose presence must be hourly, daily, perpetually felt.

As is the muscle, so is the nerve ; as is the nerve, so is the brain ; as is the brain, so is the action of the mind, in respect of firmness and force,—the power to endure, and the power to do. But alas ! there is a deeper truth than this, though less generally acknowledged ;—as is the health, so is the heart,—a pure fountain, gushing forth in streams of joy and love and beneficence, or a stagnant pool, laden with noxious vapors. It is not intellect alone that suffers from the absence of the genial influence of health : the tone and temper of the soul are affected by the same cause ; the character shrinks and dwindles ; the whole life becomes vapid.

It is unnecessary to enlarge on the evils arising from the prevalent neglect, in our plans of education, of ade-



quate provision for the securing and perfecting of health, as one of the chief blessings of life, and the best foundation for an ample and solid structure of mental acquirements. It is equally unnecessary to dwell upon the obvious fact, that the majority of females, in cities, more particularly, are equally disqualified for the full performance of the duties of active life, and for close application to intellectual pursuits, by imperfect health ; and, even under the more favorable influences of country life, the number of young females who have laid the foundation of consumptive disease in childhood, while sitting, for successive hours, with cold and wet feet, in an ill-warmed school-room, will be found, on inquiry, alarmingly large.

All our arrangements in favor of health, during the period of education, are, as yet, utterly inadequate to the purpose. If we would see a beneficial change, as regards this indispensable requisite to the well-being of woman, we must give it the principal attention, in planning the outline of education : the mere cultivation of the intellectual faculties must sink into its subordinate place. It has hitherto usurped the day, at the expense both of the health and the heart of youth.

It will not be expected of the lecturer to propose measures in detail, by which the evils of our present disproportioned culture might be remedied. Time would not suffice, at present, for such a purpose ; neither can the prescriptions of an individual apply equally well to all cases. But the assertion is probably not too strong for the fact, when it is said, that, in our day, most parents in New England, would rather see some security for the health of their daughters, during the time devoted to education, than the fullest assurance of any possible amount

of intellectual attainment ; and, further, that this feeling is now so general and so strong, that it will warrant an entire revision, and a thorough-going change, of modes of female education, in town and country.

A revolution, in this matter, is undoubtedly at hand ; and we are already seeing an end to the days when hours on hours were spent in bending over books, or sitting erect on surfaces of plank, in chilling or in suffocating rooms ; when education seemed partly to consist in contracting prematurely the stoop and hollowness of the invalid, overloading the memory, and permanently curving the spine, and issuing, at last, from school, with a brain exhausted and impaired by overwork, and a frame enfeebled for a life-time.

It remains only for a few resolute teachers, of acknowledged eminence, to unite in taking avowedly, the ground of nature and of truth, in regard to this momentous question ; and the beneficial change, now in progress, will be completely effected.

A serious defect, in our present modes of female education, is the fact that in them there is no provision made by which girls may, at the close of their school days, find themselves in possession of *the requisite skill in some mental or manual accomplishment, adequate to their support*. This omission in the plan of education, is an evil which has pressed hard on many a crushed, though silent heart. It is a deficiency which to suffer, in a community like ours, so extensively embarked in commercial and manufacturing enterprise, with all its attendant vicissitudes and uncertainties, seems next to infatuation.

Seven years ago, it was no unusual thing to see fami-

lies precipitated, in a single day, from real or fancied affluence to extreme poverty. In some of our large cities, instances of this description were distressingly frequent. Some, perhaps, of the present audience, can recollect the feelings occasioned, at the meeting of the Institute at Worcester, Massachusetts, by the recital then given of some cases such as those to which I now allude. One, in particular, it may be recollected, was so deeply affecting, as to render it difficult for the narrator himself to proceed with his story. It was the case of a widow and her daughters, whom, in the discharge of his duties, as agent for a society established at Philadelphia, for the purpose of enabling teachers to find employment, he had found in extreme indigence, earning their subsistence by the use of the needle. That mother and her daughters, had, a few weeks before, been living in the style authorized by the possession of half a million: they all happened to possess at least one valuable accomplishment, in the shape of music, painting, or one of the modern languages: they were distinguished for talent: each had devoted all her energies to the acquisition of her favorite branch, and excelled in it. The result of the inquiries made by the gentleman alluded to, was that, in a few weeks, the ladies were provided with eligible situations for attaining speedily to comfort, and even to comparative wealth.

“There they were,” said he, “when I first saw them, with the persons, the accomplishments, and the habits of princesses, plying their needles for their bread, in an obscure and narrow apartment, into which, in former days, they would not have put a domestic. But this was not all;—the dignity, the patience, and serenity, with which

they were enduring their reverse of fortune, was the most touching feature of the whole."

Nor is it, sometimes, till the innate worth and power of woman is thus developed, that she is fully known. It is no very rare sight, in cities, to see a young and ardent aspirant for wealth and position in society, pressing ambitiously and successfully onward, till the crash of some unexpected bankruptcy sweeps him down in the common ruin which it spreads around. Poverty,—to him abject poverty,—is the inevitable vicissitude awaiting his life. He is sustained, however, amidst all its privations and sufferings, by the constancy, and meek patience, and persevering spirit, of her who has shared his downfall, not less than he is by his own manhood. She has met the exigency bravely, and she bears the calamity nobly : she has parted conscientiously with every superfluity, and with many a comfort, because she felt that they were no longer hers, or his who had bestowed them ; the delicate hands, unused to toil, are now hardened by the daily drudgery of household labor, which knows no respite but at his return home, when, in the old familiar enjoyment of mingled reading and conversation, they both forget the gayer, but not the happier, hours of the past. It is then, that man understands the nature of woman.

But reverses in life are not always mitigated by being divided between two congenial hearts. They fall, sometimes, on the solitary, and, sometimes, on females on whom others are dependent for daily bread, not less, perhaps, than for counsel and guidance. What a treasure, under such circumstances, does skill, in any of its useful and available forms, become ! It is, at once, independence and power.

Such a reliance for emergency, might easily be secured to every woman, by the right direction of even a small part of the time daily devoted to the usual purposes of education. One branch of art or of instruction, for which an individual felt a preference, might thus furnish an invaluable resource, at the same time that the acquisition of it, in the requisite perfection, was not felt to be a burden but a pleasure.

An expedient yet more laudable, as requiring more courage, and more sober views of life, is that of a young lady rendering still more secure her personal independence for life, by paying for, and laboriously acquiring, the requisite expertness in some branch of manual industry, by daily application to it, for a certain number of hours.

The education of females must ever be imperfect, till it embrace a competent provision for the exigencies of life, in the form of an appropriate feminine occupation, to which women may resort, when circumstances require personal exertion for support.

Teaching has, I am aware, been, by some, considered a convenient employment, in case of necessity, and, especially, as it does not require extra time devoted to it, in the way of preparation; nothing more being, in this case, required, than merely to pay good attention to instruction received, which necessarily becomes a model to work by,—if need be. In this summary way is the business often disposed of; and in this summary way is one of the most momentous of human occupations taken up. Hence the inefficacy of instruction, in so many cases; and hence the slight regard so often paid to education, as the mould of character, and of life.

Were every school taught as it ought to be, it would unquestionably be a seminary for teachers, as well as for youth in general. The daily business of the schoolroom, would furnish a practical exhibition of the theory of teaching, in every important point. But broader views of intellectual action, than the schoolroom can furnish, and deeper insight into the human soul, than can there be acquired, are needed, to render any human being competent to plan and guide the mental career in which man passes from ignorance to knowledge, from folly to wisdom, from impulse to habit, from feeling to principle; and the young lady, who, at the age of eighteen, is called to perform even the limited duties of a governess in a family, has assumed a task infinitely more arduous, and more weighty, in its consequences, than that of the time-honored professor, who has read his lectures from his chair, to successive listening classes, for half a century.

The establishment of normal schools in New England, happily furnishes opportunity for the acquisition of that knowledge which the office of teaching implies; and at these institutions it may, to a certain extent, be acquired. But the teacher's vocation, more, perhaps, than any other pursuit, demands a certain native aptitude,—a love (not a mere fondness) for children, and a pleasure in communicating, a mild and patient, yet a firm and resolute spirit, a winning eloquence, and a never-failing tact; and, if the teacher be a woman, then double the moral power, in every particular,—to make up for the absence of that half physical force of will, by which men drive the machinery of life,—not always on the highest moral principles.

It is in the power, however, of most girls, during their own education, to acquire the skill and facility in a single



branch of education, or in a single accomplishment, which may enable them to impart useful instruction in it, or to carry it into practice themselves. But the extent and perfection of knowledge, should, in such cases, be rigorously seen to ; as the custom is by far too common, to attempt teaching without the requisite qualifications, even in things which are wholly exterior, and in which the measure of acquisition would seem to be easily applicable. Of all the quackery that now rages in New England, like an epidemic nervous fever, none is of a worse type, than the universal passion for teaching without having learned.

A great defect in our common forms of female education, is that they are addressed, too much, to the *intellect*, and that they are so little adapted to exert a genial and appropriate influence on the *sentiments of the heart*. The long list of "studies," as they are called, which constitute the "*curriculum*" of most establishments for young ladies, contains very little that is calculated to create an interest in the feelings of the learner, or to kindle an earnest love of application. We would except from the scope of this remark, the various branches of natural history, were these studied, as they should be, with the aid of actual objects and living specimens, and with the inspiring influence of actual observation in the open air. These advantages are, we are aware, provided or enjoyed, to a certain extent, in some schools ; and, in such cases, the result is, to the highest degree, beneficial : the pupils of such establishments take a deep personal interest in the study and observation of nature, and retain the feeling through life. But the common meagre style of

instruction, by means, solely, of a book and a few cuts, at once anticipates and disappoints the young mind, and blunts the interest it would take, if left to itself, in such matters.

The great facts of nature, classified in the various departments of *mathematical and physical science*, would ever be attractive subjects to the young mind, would evoke, ceaselessly, the feeling of wonder and the sense of power, were instruction in these branches of knowledge uniformly imparted with reference to phenonema themselves, or to noble illustrations of them. But, taught as they commonly are, by book lessons and toy patterns, and conned and recited by rote, they impart no elevating impulse to thought and feeling, they convey no sense of grandeur to the soul ; and instead of being felt to contain exhaustless sources of wonder and delight, they are, by the young student, unhesitatingly condemned as among the "dry studies" of which poor youth has to toil through so much.

There are, it is readily admitted, many exceptions to these faulty modes of instruction,—many instances in which the zeal and ardor of the teacher atone, to a great extent, for the want of instruments and apparatus ; and others in which the teacher's own interest in subjects, induces him to furnish these aids, to an extent that bespeaks his liberality rather than his prudence. In all such cases, the effect, even of sympathy, on young minds, is of immense value, as inspiring an interest in great subjects, and elevating the tone of intellectual character. But such instances of devotion to science and to education, are comparatively rare.

The defective modes in which the *languages*, whether ancient or modern, are usually taught, hinders their legitimate influence on the mind. The vast amount of time which is spent in the mere mechanical processes of grammatical analysis and translation, precludes, according to present arrangements, the possibility of presenting a language to the young mind, in its most interesting and, in fact, in its most instructive aspects. We lose, by our prevalent modes of teaching, the genius and spirit of a language, as embodied in its great writers, because we must needs have so much parsing and construing done within the hour assigned to that language.

True, that, for many months, and, in the case of the Latin language, for several years, the grammatical processes must be regarded as the only security for a genuine knowledge of the language. But there ought to come a time,—and that time not a stinted term,—when the higher relations of language should be closely studied, when classic writers should be perused in relation to all their characteristics of sentiment, as well as style, when their loftiest flights of thought should be followed, and their personal contributions to the progress of the human soul, justly appreciated.

It is customary, we are aware, with some, to say that education is not responsible for this part of mental culture, that such exercises belong to a later stage of progress, to a maturer state of mind, to the period of self-cultivation. But if education is to be tried by the standard of its success in imparting a love of study, in giving a direction and an impulse to the mind, and thus securing the habit of application and research ; the teacher has not acquitted himself to his office, who has merely conducted

the learner to the "laborious" "first ascent" of the "hill-side," but has never accompanied him to that region "so smooth, so green, so full of goodly prospects and melodious sounds, on every side."

It is sometimes pleaded, in extenuation of the exclusive attention usually given to the mere grammatical mechanism of a language,—especially of the Latin,—that the time assigned to it is too brief to admit of attempting anything more, in the way of teaching. But if whatever is worth doing, is worth doing well, more time should be taken for this comparatively arduous and extensive department of instruction; and if time cannot be afforded to the requisite amount, better that some other subject should be introduced, instead of one requiring so much.

There is much reason to fear that, on the plan adopted in our higher schools for females, the mental polish, the elegance of taste, the genuine relish for consummate beauty in expression, which ought to be the end and aim of the study of Latin, are but seldom reaped, as the fruit of years of application. On inquiring carefully into the mental condition and attainments of young ladies educated at our best schools and academies, it will often be found that mental labor, in the department of language, has extended only through the region of toil, but not into that of pleasure; and that, as a natural consequence, application is usually discontinued in this direction, when the necessity of school routine has ceased to act as a motive. A result this, which a little more liberal aid from the teacher, in the form of oral explanations and suggestive remarks, on the spirit and scope of characteristic passages in a lesson, together with a little more of quality, and a

little less of quantity, in the lesson itself, might have effectually prevented.

Another deduction too generally made from the natural pleasures of education, in the mental training of the female sex, is the unreasonable extent to which it has become fashionable to carry *mathematical* studies. These departments of science are unquestionably of great service in mental discipline, if limited to their proper extent. They aid the clearness and distinctness of the mind's perceptions, in regard to objects and facts ; and the rudiments of these branches of knowledge, are, no doubt, the common property and rightful inheritance of all minds. To man, in some of his pursuits, they are indispensable, even in their abstrusest relations. Nor ought any woman who has special endowments of mind for the prosecution of mathematical investigations, to forego the pleasure and the advantage of indulging her peculiar taste in this respect. But, to women in general, the uses of mathematics, even as a mental discipline, are naturally limited. Woman's mental province seems to be, rather, the region of sentiment, of imagination, of feeling : her highest power is over the affections and tendencies of the soul ; from the dawn to the close of life, her influence is over the moral nature. As a delegated minister of Infinite benevolence, she bends over the cradle of the infant, and over the couch of the dying man ; and the light of her affectionate nature, radiates all the space that lies between. Through his whole life, man is ever learning of her, as of a being milder, purer, more disinterested than himself.

An education which is true to woman, will incline much more to the moral than the physical relations of

our being ; and *literature*, as the great vehicle of sentiment, will therefore justly claim much the larger portion of the time which is devoted to mental culture. The literature of our own language will, for a similar reason, be entitled to a large share of whatever time is assigned to literary studies. As yet, however, the arrangements of education are greatly disproportioned, in this respect. A young lady, at most of our schools, gives several years' attentive study to Latin, and to the modern languages, but, excepting a little grammatical parsing, and a little recitation in rhetoric,—none at all to her own. The noble treasures of sentiment and expression in Milton, the ethereal beauty of Shakspeare,—his whole “wilderness of sweets,”—receive no special attention during the period when taste and mental habit are forming. But few young ladies, indeed, are so educated that, at the close of their career, they are capable of even reading aloud, with appropriate expression, a single page from one of these illustrious writers, whose works are the loftiest productions of human genius.

In this department of literary culture, we have fallen from the standard of former years. Ladies educated forty years ago, read so attentively, both at school, and at home, the classic authors of our language, that they had an intimate knowledge of all their best works, and had even large portions of them impressed on their memory. Hence no small share of their noble sentiments and just expression, and their ready appreciation of both ; hence, too, the clearness and decision of their judgment, and their classical propriety of taste.

Young ladies, in our own day, are rather prone, it is believed, to scout sentiment as prosy and superfluous,



and to shun the manifestations of feeling, as savoring too obviously of the "simple." That even the best writers of the early part of last century, made too much parade of sentiment, cannot be denied ; nor is it less true that, in the latter part of it, writers, as well as people at court, had learned to "get on very well without hearts." The tone of sentiment is, in our day, less formal, less "pronounced," than it was half a century ago. Can we, with justice, say that it is not also less firm, less decided ? A larger infusion of vigorous sentiment into literature and into life, would impart a greater relish to existence, and render no slight aid in maintaining personal and national character. Let any one who questions the assertion, look again into the letters of Mrs. Adams and her contemporaries.

The inadequate degree of attention paid to the study of *history*, as a part of the education of females, is another prevalent defect in modern culture, as regards the influence exerted, during early life, on the formation of sentiment and character. The practice of using compends and outlines of general history, instead of studying, closely and in detail, extensive historical accounts of particular countries and nations, is one of the surest means of forestalling the young mind, as regards the natural interest and pleasure connected with voluntary excursions into this rich and instructive field of knowledge,—so fruitful in the lessons of wisdom, so copious in materials for the construction of character, so auspicious to the developement of the heart, in every form of just and noble sentiment.

The recital of history becomes interesting and impressive in proportion as it is full and minute. The soul is naturally athirst for all the particulars of time, and place,

and circumstance, attending a great action, or the life of a great man. But the hackneyed compiler of histories, seems to take a malicious pleasure in disappointing this healthy appetite of the mind, and offering, instead, the dry husks of the stipulations of treaties, and the prorogations of parliaments, the policy of cabinets, and the changes of ministry. Our school compends of history seem to be composed on the model of the memorabilia on the margin of an almanac, where the painstaking reader may at once learn that, on such a day of the month, the moon changes, that fair weather may be expected, and that, on this day, was fought a great battle, in which so many were killed and wounded, and in which one side claimed "a famous victory,"—though, as in the ballad, to the teasing question of the child, "What was it all about?" the grave chronicle can furnish no other answer than the solemn and rather stale one of old Caspar, "It was a famous victory."

The result of using concise abridgments of history at school, is precisely what their dry and meagre fare might be expected to produce in mental dietetics: young ladies leave school with a mind blunted to the genuine relish for historical reading, and destitute of that incitement to investigation, which comes from a sympathy with human character, as delineated in the action and events of history. A girl's career of historical study, in the form of reciting *memoriter* from a compendious abstract, is but a walk through "the valley of dry bones," instead of a long and interesting excursion into the world of life, with knowledge, in the garb of human experience, for a guide, fact for invigorating food, truth for a healthful atmosphere, and reflection for the intervals of rest.

History, as it is found in the bible,—as it is found in every original and faithful record of life and action and event,—wins the mind more than fiction, and creates, while it feeds, the appetite of the soul. The generalizations and the abstractions of manufactured history, have no hold upon the heart, and, for the most part, dwell long enough in the memory to be recited, but no longer. Put into the hands of a child the *Tales of a Grandfather*, or the *Chronicles of Froissart*, and you secure, in the young mind, a love of historical reading, that will last through life. But let the young reader's first book be an outline of general history ; and, in many cases, it will prove a most effectual damper to the desire for subsequent reading in this department.

Were we to limit our attention, in the education of girls, to the faithful perusal, and attentive study in detail, of one branch of history, and accompany it with those copious explanations from the teacher, and those extensive and minute researches which an exact knowledge, of even one department, requires ; did we leave to the young mind the deepfelt pleasure arising from sharing in the long continued labor of building up one substantial and enduring fabric of historical knowledge,—of decorating it with all its graphic appendages of scenery and manners and costume, we should lack no other inducement to perseverance in study. But, as education is now conducted, this whole subject is slighted ; historical reading is superficial in mature years ; and knowledge in this branch is extremely imperfect.

There is reason to doubt whether, as regards a sound knowledge of history, ladies at the present day, would

stand an advantageous comparison with those educated fifty years ago, when extensive reading in ample volumes, at home, was the main reliance of every woman who possessed a love of information, and when the "fatal facility" of skimming over subjects, by the aid of compends, was a temptation unknown.

Female education, as it is now conducted, is deficient, not less as regards the cultivation of sentiment, and the consequent developement of character, than in the appropriate means of imparting to young minds *the tone and elevation of a pure, healthy, discriminating, and,—if we may so term it,—creative taste.* Nature, art, and literature, are, in relation to this attribute of mind, our great sources of life and aliment. But our indoor modes of living, and our sedentary habits of bookish study, in cities especially, cut us off from access to the great book of that "elder scripture writ by God's own hand," or supersede the use of it by some miserable epitome of "science falsely so called." The freshness, the vividness, and the purity of association, which are the secret sources of good taste, come directly from Nature ; they come not at second hand,—they are "emanations of the indwelling Life." There is no cunning process of study by which they can be stealthily imbibed from books : they are a divinely ordained growth in the soul that is faithful to that manifestation of Himself which God has deigned to give us in His works.

A living and a true taste is the outgoing and expression of that which Nature has infused ; and when we regard the moulding influence of the mother over the dawning mind, and the growing tendencies of the infant and

the child,—and, virtually, over the whole form of life and character,—we cannot but be aware of the inexpressible value, to woman, of a taste that is true to nature, and pure in all its forms. One low word, look, or act, of a mother is as surely repeated in the expression, the features, and the habits of her child, as her face and form are imaged to the eye in the mirror on the wall of her chamber ; and of all the forms of beauty which the painter, the sculptor, the musician, or even the poet, conjures up from “the vasty deep” of imagination, to sway the soul of man, and bend his heart to worship, none is half so potent, none so touching, or so true, as the unconscious child, repeating the affectionate tone, the tender look, the kindly act of Nature’s genuine artist, the mother. Let us keep the future mother in communion with nature. Let the study and contemplation of nature form a larger part of her education. Let us abridge the unprofitable labor of conning technical books about nature, and impart more liberally the pure and ennobling and heart-expanding pleasure, and the divine instruction, which are imbibed at the fountain-head of observation. Let the citizen who is by no means rich, toil to afford his daughters the invaluable advantages of the summer season spent amid the scenes and objects of nature,—where the young mind may acquire that which is infinitely beyond the knowledge of nature,—the genuine love of it.

The mental evils arising from the absence of nature’s influence on taste and disposition, extend to the cultivation of art and literature, and appear in the legion-forms of false and depraved style in music, in drawing and painting, in poetry, and in literature, generally. Woman has not, naturally, the force and decision of feeling,

with which man scorns so heartily, and breaks through so easily, the trammels of a false taste. The love of beauty is so natural and so prevalent a feeling with woman, that she finds the beautiful everywhere ; and it is her happiness, (not less than her weakness,) to create it where it does not exist. Is it not her province and her function to evoke it everywhere ? But this quick susceptibility, this ready response to the presence and the power of beauty, when added to woman's liability to the influence of sympathy and of opinion, expose her to the many evils of prescription and authority, in the shape of fashion and prevailing whim. Hence we find that when her taste is not firmly grounded on nature, it is apt to yield to current influences and arbitrary notions. Hence we see so many hours spent in laborious accommodation to the fantasies of mode in dress, in music, or in anything else which claims to be the ascendant charm of the hour. Hence, too, the precious moments which, in the aggregate of a year, might yield the invaluable results of useful or graceful acquisition, wasted and worse than wasted on the perusal of some passing trifle of light reading, in a fashionable magazine, and the confirmed neglect of those noble and enduring forms of beauty and genius, which are accessible in the works of so many of our great writers.

The very few hours of the day which can be afforded to mere accomplishments, and to literature as a recreation, should, from the first steps in female education, onward, be judiciously superintended by instructors. All care should be taken to aid the young mind in selecting the purest and the best models only, and to indicate the distinctive features of genuine beauty, as they differ from the spurious.



Music and drawing should never be allowed to become what they now so generally are, dreaded forms of drudgery, which wear out the heart, and wrinkle the brow, of childhood, and irritate the temper of after life. Purchased at such expense, they become the curses, not the blessings of education. Taught aright, their accomplishments are invaluable, as sources of good influence on taste and mental character ; but allowed to degenerate to the standard of the trivial style in which they are so extensively practised, they become causes of degradation and corruption of taste, which spread their baneful influence over the whole mind, and hinder the perception of genuine beauty in any of its forms. No girl is benefited by being enabled to play the trashy music of a low popular air : the habit of doing this thing, vitiates the ear and taste of youth, and cherishes low tendencies in character. But the instruction which opens the ear and the heart to the very simplest strain of a noble composer, is beyond expression, in value, as regards the whole mental being of the learner.

The trifling with the pencil, which assumes the name of drawing, in most of our female schools, is but a miserable waste of time, and a source of perversion to taste. Drawing, as a discipline even to the eye, is an exercise worse than useless, unless it is exerted with the most rigorous exactness, as to line and form ; and it cultivates a false tendency of taste, when it is performed so as to represent objects merely fanciful and pretty. Drawing is an exercise which, as the art of representing the visible grandeur and beauty of the outward world, should be practised in the feeling that led to the empassioned exclamation of the ancient philosopher, " God geometrizes ! "

The snatches of time usually assigned to the cultivation of this art and to that of music, are utterly inadequate to the purpose of exerting a good influence on taste and mental habit ; and it would be a most effectual, though certainly a disinterested, service to education, were teachers always candid enough to suggest to parents, that a little poor music, or a little poor drawing, is infinitely worse than none,—that the latter leaves taste at least unvitiated, while the former as surely degrades it.

One of the most obvious defects in female education, is the neglect of all those fine influences on taste, which emanate from the literature of our native tongue. In few schools for the female sex, is it customary to assign any time for the express purpose of studying the classic writers of our own language. This work is left to be accomplished at home, and by unaided application ; and the result, usually, is that, excepting the current literature of the day, (much of which is positively injurious to the mind,) most women know little more of the best English writers, than they found in their reading-books at school. Yet there is evidently no department of mental culture in which so much might be effected towards forming an early taste for genuine beauty of thought and expression, and thus forestalling and precluding the transient and inferior matter which is, at the present day, so copiously furnished for the deterioration of mind and taste.

The canons of sound criticism, and the principles of beauty in expression, are not so recondite as to be necessarily excluded from study during at least the later stages of education ; nor is there any department of intellectual application, in which a young person so needs the aid of a maturer judgment, and a more profoundly disciplined

taste than her own, to assist her in drawing those just discriminations, and tracing those delicate lines, without which judgment becomes prejudice, and taste degenerates into caprice.

The extent of my preceding remarks, and the limits of a lecture, prevent any lengthened observation on the concluding topic of the present address ; the *intellectual deficiencies of female education in its existing forms*. A bare enumeration of a few, is all that can now be attempted.

There is reason to apprehend that, in most female schools,—even in those which are not chargeable with the fault of too wide a range of study in their plan of education, there is not that *perfect exactness of acquirement*, which is so important in relation to the elements of knowledge, as the foundation of all subsequent attainments, both at school, and in the period of self-cultivation which is generally supposed to follow it. The fault referred to is, it is true, by no means confined to female schools : most of our seminaries of learning for the other sex, are conducted on a similar plan, that of hurrying rapidly over a large surface, instead of advancing gradually but surely to a definite point. The lessons, for example, set in Latin, to a boy beginning the study of that language, are from five to tenfold the extent usually assigned in the best schools of other countries. The consequence naturally is, that a very superficial and imperfect knowledge, comparatively, is acquired from one stage of education to another.

This injudicious haste is doubly injurious, when it is allowed to hurry the processes of application, during the shorter time allotted to female education. The ambition

of the young, unchecked by the experience of the mature in mind, will ever be aiming at more than can be done well. The thorough-going patience required for a sure and effectual progress, is a virtue of difficult attainment to youth ; and when the teacher yields to the pupil, the whole career of education accomplishes but little to what it ought. Patient application is the first, the second, and the third condition of substantial acquirement and intellectual power. Slight and superficial application not only stints the mind of knowledge, but destroys its vigor, and impairs the whole character. Better read attentively and reflectively a few books, at home, than go through the whole routine of formal education, in the hurried and imperfect way in which it is sometimes done.

Time will not permit me to particularize to any extent. I can only glance, in passing, at the obvious imperfection of instruction in many female schools, as regards the scanty allowance of time and attention assigned to an accurate knowledge and use of *our own language*, in the various forms of reading, writing, and conversing. Our present arrangements, in these respects, are equally inadequate to the purposes of useful and of agreeable communication ; and they bear no proportion to the time comparatively squandered on subjects of inferior moment to woman, in the sphere of her daily duties and her ceaseless influence.

Another prevalent fault in female education, consists in the defective mode of teaching the *modern languages of continental Europe*. These, learners are, in many schools, permitted to acquire by book, or with the aid of a person not educated in the country in which the language is spoken. The consequence is, that, although

the pupil may, in such circumstances, acquire a grammatical knowledge of a language, to a certain extent, the pronunciation of it,—a process indispensable to a true idea of its genius and character,—is not acquired, but only a very awkward and ridiculous attempt at it. The extreme extent of this evil is prevented, in some schools, by means of a native teacher who attends and gives instruction in his language, once or twice a week. The great practical means, however, of acquiring a thorough knowledge of the spirit and idioms of a language, is yet, in most cases, wanting; as time and instruction are not provided to the extent requisite for the purpose of obtaining a familiar knowledge of the language, by the daily use of its colloquial forms.

The Latin language is now extensively a subject of instruction in female schools; and unquestionably it is a source of profound and exact discipline to the mind, an invaluable aid to an accurate knowledge of etymology, and a source of elevating and healthful influence on taste and expression. But the study of this language is not always carried to the extent required for a deep or permanent effect on the mental character. Successive years are needed to do justice to this language: nothing worth while can be accomplished in it, without a careful observance of the rule of short lessons perfectly prepared,—learned in the style of the multiplication table and the alphabet. Latin falls short of the mark, for the purposes of female education, so long as a sister's "quantities," in the pronunciation of the language, are a source of amusement to her college-educated brother. Here, more than elsewhere, it is the quality, not the quantity, of knowledge, that should form the standard.

Having had occasion to mention, incidentally, in preceding remarks, several other prominent defects in female education, I need not dwell longer on this part of my subject.

If to any of my audience I seem to have overlooked the greatest of all the acknowledged deficiencies of female education, that, in few schools do we see instruction drawn from its highest sources of moral and religious influence, or woman early trained to recognise her true place in the world, as a ministering spirit subserving the purposes of "the Supreme Good," I can only say, in reply, that such topics have been left for a worthier presentation by others.



LECTURE III.

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ON

SOME OF THE OBSTACLES TO THE GREATER SUCCESS

OF

COMMON SCHOOLS.

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BY CHARLES NORTHEND,  
Principal of the Aborn Street School, Salem.

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MUCH has been said within a few years, about the importance of our public schools,—and the necessity of elevating their character and increasing their means of usefulness, has been zealously, ably, and somewhat successfully urged upon the consideration of the community. The friends and advocates of popular education have not been backward in proposing plans for operation, some of which have been well worthy of attention, while others have been altogether *visionary, futile, or impracticable*. Conventions have been called, lectures have been published and circulated, and newspaper columns and periodicals of the day, have lent their aid, to some extent, in order to arouse the public mind to the great and noble

object of providing for the free and wide-spread means of general intelligence and morality. All these efforts have been well *in* and *of* themselves. But, as might have been anticipated, many possessing a wisdom not according to knowledge, have been *over-zealous*. With much freedom they have condemned all past proceedings, and with the utmost confidence proposed their own plans and theories as eminently calculated to effect the desired changes and improvements.

But while so many are thus prompt in *bringing forward*, with so much apparent interest, zeal and confidence, *new* theories, how few are really competent to carry *any* into successful operation? Many have yet to learn that *theory* is one thing and *practice* quite another. As well might we attempt to have the same model and size answer for vessels to navigate all our varying streams and waters with equal rapidity and safety as to make any uniform theory answer for all our schools. So long as circumstances, in themselves different, cause a diversity in the features and condition of schools, every teacher, in order to be successful, must have within himself the requisite skill and ability to vary his plans and adapt them to existing, unforeseen and immediate wants.

That our free school system will admit of many and great improvements is doubtless true; but that every thing is or *has been* wrong, I do not believe. The good qualities of any institution or system should be commended and fostered, while efforts are made to *discover*, *point out*, and *remove* bad ones. The free school system of New-England should be the pride of every good citizen, and for its unobstructed and perfect operation should he ever be willing to labor. Other systems, for other countries

and circumstances, may possess merit which would cease to exist under our own institutions. We must judge of the worth and usefulness of a system from the nature, extent and importance of its results; and where, I would ask, shall we find more of general intelligence, morality, spirit of enterprise or qualification for active business, than exists within New England, and under the influence of her excellent system of popular education? In view of such results we should be slow to neglect or condemn a system,—but we should rather labor to secure its more efficient and extensive operation.

I propose, on the present occasion, to consider “**SOME OF THE OBSTACLES TO THE SUCCESS OF COMMON SCHOOLS,**” and to make some suggestions which have a bearing, directly or indirectly, upon the interests of these schools. My remarks will be made in reference to these institutions as they exist throughout the country, and many of them may not be strictly applicable to our cities and large towns.

I. *The want of proper attention to the structure and location of school houses,* is a serious obstacle to the best interests of schools.

So much, of late, has been said and done on this point, that it may be deemed entirely superfluous for me even to allude to it. To the well directed efforts of a few interested, zealous and influential men, the public is indebted for great and important changes, already wrought, in opinion and action; and as a “little leaven leaveneth the whole lump,” so we may hope that the interest excited by their efforts will continue to increase and spread until our whole country shall be permanently benefitted. But while much *has been done*, it is true that much re-

mains *to be done*, and it best becomes us to express our approbation of the good already achieved, by uniting our efforts to carry on and complete the reform.

New England is yet disfigured, if not disgraced, by a multitude of witnesses of the want of skill and taste in the structure of school-houses ; and nought, but the frequent and decided protest of those who feel the importance of the subject, can prevent the *perpetuated* existence of these witnesses in the shape of repaired and "patched up" school-houses.

From an examination of some of these buildings, as they now exist, we might reasonably infer, that the design was to make them as *inconvenient, uncomfortable and unpleasant* as possible,—and, surely, if such *was* the design, it has been in many places, most admirably executed. Can you not now call to mind some of the school-houses in which you spent many of your youthful hours ? Can you not remember the dreary and barren location ? the uncouth structure ? the uncomfortable seats and desks ? the crowded room ? the foul and "pent up" atmosphere ? the room so very cold in winter and so oppressively warm in summer ? the rough and unpainted interior, with not even the "*whited outside* ?" I say, can you not recal all these things, and does not the mere thought of those seats and desks almost *cause you to ache* ?

But we have reason to rejoice that these miserable specimens of the "*knowledge boxes*" (we might more properly say *torture boxes*) which have so long been visible in our towns and villages, are rapidly disappearing, and if the present interest shall continue and extend, may not some Yankee realize a fortune, some fifty years hence, by attaching a horse to one of these preserved 10 by 12

"boxes" with its fixtures complete, and driving about the country for exhibition ! Certainly such a consummation may be most devoutly wished !

But there is another defect, more serious in its consequences than all others combined, and that is, *want of proper provision for ventilation*. On this point it is impossible to speak too freely or too frequently. Our school-houses, are, often, crowded with children, whose healthful and energetic existence depends much upon the state of the atmosphere they breathe, with no means provided for removing the impure air, and supplying its place with fresh and pure, save such apertures as the hand of time, or the knife of some mischievous school-boy has made. It is computed, that in a school-room each pupil destroys the oxygen of about 1 gallon of air every minute. In a school of 50 scholars 5000 gallons would be rendered unfit for use every hour. And yet how few have ever thought of this, or provided for it when constructing school-houses. How many teachers, and how many pupils, have suffered and languished, and even died, from being compelled to spend so much time in an impure and deadened atmosphere ? It is unquestionably true that disease is frequently contracted, and the constitution irreparably injured, from this cause. To this, also, may be attributed most of the cases of headache, and those feelings of lassitude and prostration which often characterize a school ; and to the same source may be charged those indescribable, and otherwise unaccountable, cases of restlessness, and those instances of petulance and sensitiveness which are so contagious in their nature and so unpleasant in their effects. The evil consequences resulting from a want of suitable

ventilation, are neither sudden nor violent, but not the less actual, and often fatal.

Of the location of school-houses it is hardly necessary to speak. Every one, who has given any attention to the subject, knows, that, as a general thing, they are not located with any particular regard to pleasantness, or to the amusements, or convenience of pupils. They are either placed in some gloomy and retired spot, or so "hemmed in" by other buildings as almost wholly to exclude the sun's rays and the free circulation of pure air; or where the constant pounding of the neighboring workshops proves a serious interruption to the order and quiet of the school-room. If I was called upon for a definition of "school-house," and was obliged to depend upon the specimens furnished in many towns, as a basis, I should say "*a school-house*" is a building designed to contain the greatest possible number in a given space without any reference either to the comfort or convenience of the occupants, and placed on some spot good for nothing else.

Now where these things are thus, we cannot reasonably expect much from the schools. In other matters we act otherwise. We are not willing to have our churches constructed on the same principle. In these we are unwilling to spend two or three hours weekly, unless our seats are made comfortable with cushions and every desirable convenience, yet we are not at all disturbed at the thought of having our children confined six hours daily, balancing, as best they can, upon upright posts, or cramped up in narrow and uncomfortable seats, —breathing and re-breathing the same foul air, and when released from their miserable confinement, doomed to



see the same dull and gloomy aspect of the adjacent premises. And hence an education becomes associated with *pain, unpleasantness, gloominess*. But these things ought not so to be. A school-house should be constructed and located with peculiar regard to *comfort, convenience, and pleasantness*. The seats and desks should be as easy and as much adapted to the free and healthful position of the occupant as possible, and more than two should never sit at the same desk, and, if practicable, not more than one. Every part of the room should be finished with proper taste and neatness, and provision should be made to meet every reasonable want of the pupils. An expenditure of a few dollars for paint, will not only improve the appearance of the building, but, in point of economy, will be a profitable investment;—for while a poorly finished and ill constructed house will almost *invite* the abuse of children, a good style of finish will be properly appreciated and preserved, and at the same time will tend to incite and foster a corresponding appearance of neatness in the persons and habits of the pupils.

As regards location, I would say, select one of nature's best, choicest spots, or as nearly so as circumstances will permit :—a spot, if possible, pleasing to the eye ; retired, though neither lonely nor dreary ; secluded, though not entirely shut out from the active world ; removed alike from the noisy workshop and the busy street. Let it be a spot to which the fresh and pure air, and the sun's enlivening rays may have proper access. Ample and pleasant play-ground, well supplied with ornamental trees, should belong to the building, and thus every apology be

removed for trespassing on the adjoining lands. Such a location, with a neat and properly constructed house, will tend to connect agreeable associations with learning,—and “*going to school*,” will be considered a delightful *privilege*, rather than a disagreeable *task*, as is now too often the case.

But I have already enlarged too much on this point, though it is a pre-requisite so essential to a pleasant, happy, and successful school, that I hardly knew how to say less. It is one of those subjects which must be so frequently presented as almost to become *repulsive* before merited attention will be given to it.

II. *The frequent employment of teachers who are incompetent to discharge the duties of the office and who feel no particular interest in the cause of instruction, is injurious to the best interests of the schools.*

In my remarks under this head, I shall have no reference to that large and highly respectable class who have engaged in teaching as a *profession*. Most of such manifest a spirit of devotion to their calling, and a perseverance, which cannot fail of crowning their labors with abundant success. But there are, and always have been, more *nominal* teachers than *real* ones. The inducements held out, as regards permanency of employment or reward of services, are not such as will engage the heart, the time, and the influence of men of talents and attainments of a high order. In no department, probably, is there so much need of sterling worth in every good qualification, and yet in no department is the premium awarded to real merit so paltry and inadequate. Hence, in nearly every community may be found men who are

teachers from necessity, or misfortune, rather than from a true devotion to the business, proceeding from a just conception of the important and responsible nature of incumbent duties. The profession of teaching has been a kind of "*city of refuge*" for those who have no abiding employment ; and who too often are unfit for any. Many have entered upon the duties, or I should rather say *trampled* upon the duties of the office and "*kept school*," influenced by no higher motives than a desire to obtain the stipulated compensation. But what they thus gain, their employers doubly lose ; for however well such *mock* teachers may succeed in filling their own pockets, it is very certain that they accomplish nothing towards filling the heads and minds of the children with useful instruction. Such teachers not only bring a reproach upon the profession, but they greatly retard the progress of the schools in which they are engaged, and render the work of more worthy and competent successors vastly more difficult ; for much of their time must be given to the removal of errors and the counteracting of wrong impressions formed under the influence of their predecessors. True economy would prompt to the payment of the individuals in question, not for instruction imparted, but for a pledge not to attempt to impart any.

In the selection of men to take the charge of business of any *other* nature, every precaution is taken to ascertain whether the candidate possesses the qualification and skill requisite for the faithful and profitable discharge of the necessary duties. This we consider the part of wisdom. But in the employment of those who are to educate and train the youthful mind and fit the untutored and ignotant child of to-day, for the virtuous, intelligent and

useful citizen of to-morrow, a far different course is pursued, and, too often, is *cheapness* the only "*open Sesame*" to the office of teacher, regardless alike of real merit or of aptness to instruct or to discipline. The following case will, in some degree, illustrate a feeling too prevalent, in many places, even at the present enlightened day. "Stouber, the predecessor of Oberlin and pastor of Waldbach, on his arrival in the parish desired to visit the principal school. He was accordingly conducted into a miserable cottage where a number of children were crowded together without any apparent occupation. He inquired for the master. 'There he is,' said one, as soon as silence could be obtained, pointing to a withered old man, who lay on a little bed in one corner. 'Are you the schoolmaster, my good friend?' said Stouber. 'Yes, sir.' 'And what do you teach the children?' 'Nothing, sir.' 'Nothing! how is that?' 'Because,' replied the old man, 'I know nothing myself.' 'Why, then, were you appointed schoolmaster?' said Stouber. 'Why, sir, I had been taking care of the Waldbach pigs for a great number of years, and when I got too old and infirm for that employment, they sent me here to take care of the children.'"

And is it not true, that men who are fitted for nothing else are frequently "*pensioned off*" with the charge of a school? And is it not equally true, that a teacher who has devoted his best years and wasted his energies in the untiring and faithful discharge of arduous duties, is cast aside as unfit for any other business, and left in old age, destitute, even, of the reward often bestowed upon a favorite horse or dog,—a life support in consideration of good services rendered in younger days!

III. *The inconsiderable appropriations made for the support of schools, and the manner of making them, in many towns*, attach to the cause of popular education a very undesirable insignificancy. A call upon the inhabitants of some districts, "in town meeting assembled" for the purpose of providing for the public operations of the town, might lead one to suppose that *schools* were a sort of *public nuisance* to be abated by an abatement of expenditures in their behalf. The first thing done is to vote to raise a certain amount of money for public purposes. After this, very liberal appropriations are made for the support of good roads, for the wants of the Fire, Military and other companies, for the prosecution of legal difficulties, &c. &c.—and *last of all* the school department comes in for "*all unappropriated moneys.*" Such has been the case in many towns, and such is the case in some even now, though we have reason to rejoice that the number is annually growing less, and that many places have already assigned to the "school department" a deserved prominence. This is encouraging, certainly, and will result to the highest good of the schools,—while the opposite course, with appropriations grudgingly and penuriously made, will have a withering and degrading effect. Generous appropriations for schools *one year* will produce results so favorable and satisfactory as to secure still more hearty and liberal provisions for the *next*, as may be seen in the increased, and annually increasing appropriations of some towns.

IV. *The entire neglect, or the partial and injudicious performance of the duties of School Committees*, is often prejudicial to the prosperity of the schools under their charge.

The office of School Committee is no sinecure. Its duties are important and arduous ; its rewards,—pecuniary or honorary,—quite inconsiderable. The faithful and intelligent discharge of these duties, contributes much to the usefulness of the schools. It is not my intention, at this time, to consider or discuss their general nature and extent. In most instances they are much better performed, than appreciated by those for whose benefit they are discharged. My design is, merely to allude to a disposition, somewhat prevalent, to under-rate the schools and represent their condition as extremely deplorable. One would infer, from the remarks or reports of some who hold the office in question, that an ability to censure and find fault added much to the competency of the incumbents. If they visit a school, it is with more of the censorious spirit, than with a desire to commend and encourage,—and if they address the pupils, it is, frequently, in a manner calculated to impair all confidence in the teacher, and to weaken his influence and authority. I will not say that the schools are in a very flattering condition ;—I will even grant that they may be very defective. Will it tend to improve or elevate them, to decry them and represent them as unworthy of patronage ? Most certainly not. If a teacher fails from incompetency, or from want of interest, to meet reasonable wants, the sooner and more quietly his connection with the school ceases, the better will it be for all concerned. It is the first duty of a committee to become satisfied respecting the proper qualifications of teachers,—and a second and never-ceasing duty to sustain and encourage them while in their service. It is very rarely the case that public censure or decrual will subserve any good purpose



so far as relates to school matters. If parents receive unfavorable impressions of a school they will not be disposed to patronize it.

If a teacher is deficient or negligent in some particulars he should receive proper hints and advice in a proper way, but it is not often necessary to administer reproof in presence of a school, nor can it be done without injurious effects. I would say, that a committee man should send his children—if he has any to send—to the school he superintends, and thus manifest in a decided way his confidence in its goodness and efficiency ; he should often visit the school, and manifest a lively and deep interest in promoting, in every suitable way, its general interests, and always be ready to sustain the teacher and defend him from attacks which are, often, so inconsiderately and so cruelly made. In so doing he will cheer and stimulate the teacher, and induce a feeling of confidence, that shall be productive of the happiest results.

V. *The disposition on the part of parents to send their children to school at too early an age*, I consider detrimental to the schools, and also to the children. Here I must not be understood to affirm, that children begin to *learn*, too soon, but, that they are, very frequently, subjected to the instruction and discipline of the school-room at too early a period of their existence. A child, who is scarcely able to speak some of the most common and simple words, has enough to learn, and enough whereon to exercise his opening mind, without being forced, with (to him) unmeaning sounds and dull monotony, to repeat his A, B, C, or to pronounce his a—b—ab. He has but just commenced his being in a world of novelties and

wonders, and which way soever he may turn his eye, he sees enough to exercise his tender mind and awaken thoughts ; and the words and names, which he hourly hears, are quite sufficient for him to retain. And, if, within the doors of the parental roof, he hears and sees enough to excite his curiosity and exercise his reflective powers, how much more does he meet with, that is new, interesting and wonderful, when he wanders "out of doors." As he gazes with childish delight upon the rattling carriages of the street, think you that the momentary glance leaves no impression on his mind, or awakens no thoughts or ideas before dormant ? As he walks into the fields and gardens, and with infant rapture beholds the charming flowers, the springing grass, the waving grain and stately trees, is his little mind inactive, or unaffected ? As he looks, with simple and natural wonder, upon the water, and, perchance, sees some noble ship moving majestically along, has not his young mind enough on which to feed and grow ? As he views, with pure amazement, and perhaps with terrific astonishment, a *puffing, whizzing, flying* train upon one of our railroads, think you his mind can remain torpid ? And when he raises his eyes to "heaven's blue vault," and views the golden orb of day, and the moon and countless stars, "those lesser lights that rule the night," have we not reason to apprehend danger from excess, rather than from deficiency of action ?

Who, that has taken some prattling child upon his knee and undertaken to answer his earnest and almost numberless questions, has not been, as it were, "struck dumb" by the artless and sincere manner in which his little friend will finally ask "where is God, and who made

Him ?” And can a child who is thus interested to learn respecting things which he sees, or about which he hears, and is at last left *to think, to conjecture, to wonder, who, what and where* the great first cause and grand sustainer of all things is, receive any better exercise for his expanding mind ? Should he, until his *wonder*, and *amazement* and *delight* and *curiosity* have in a measure subsided, or become gratified, be confined to the dull monotony, and, to him, unmeaning routine of a school-room ?

Let him be aided in his endeavors to understand all that he sees with inquiring interest ; let him be assisted, in a degree, to comprehend the meaning and use of the language he daily and hourly hears ; let an attempt be made to solve all his doubts and queries and wonders, and when he has acquired some familiarity with objects of every day observation, he may be prepared to learn the nature and use of letters.

Children who have been sent to school when quite young, and pressed onward, have become disgusted with exercises which they could not comprehend. They have learned to read before they were able to understand the *object* of reading, or the *meaning* of what they read. They have been incited on by the novelty of the exercise and by flattery, and as soon as these lose their influence,—as they certainly will,—they sink into a state of dislike or apathy, from which it is no easy matter to arouse them. But let a child’s mind be well exercised by leading him to comprehend the meaning and use of every thing he observes around him, let his curiosity be properly cultivated, and he will soon be anxious *to read*, that he may, from books, derive new information and new delight. Instead of regarding his early lessons as dull

and useless, he will look upon them as *keys* which will unlock for him the "storehouse of knowledge," and explain to him the many mysteries and wonderful things about which he is constantly thinking ; in other words, he will commence learning with a definite and rational object in view.

VI. *The neglect of primary schools, or the want of suitable provision for instruction in them*, is a serious obstacle to the greater usefulness of our free school system. Until quite recently, these schools have been regarded almost in the light of necessary evils,—and in many places they are so regarded at the present time. But very little attention has been given to the qualifications of those to whom their charge has been committed, and for the very good reason, that no special qualifications have been deemed requisite. But they demand and merit better treatment, and of all schools they will suffer most from neglect.

That cultivator, who should neglect his plants and young trees while in the nursery, and assign as an excuse that they were soon to be transplanted and would then receive more attention, would be pronounced exceedingly unwise. While in the nursery, they should be watched and cultivated with the greatest care, that they may become fit subjects for transplantation. If allowed, in the nursery, from an overgrowth of weeds and thorns to become crooked and stunted, they will probably always continue so, or become ill-shaped and worthless trees. So it is with our primary schools. They are, as their name designates, of primary importance, and should be so regarded. Impressions which children here receive will "grow with their growth and strengthen with their

strength." How important, then, that these impressions be of the right kind, and that they be seasonably and properly made ! How important that these schools lay broad and deep and well, the foundations on which the higher schools are to erect the superstructure ! How much time and strength, that often, must, necessarily, be spent in *undoing* and *re-doing*, might be most pleasantly and profitably spent in extending and perfecting the good work, if properly commenced ! I would not speak disparagingly of the teachers of these schools. They have been in many cases much better than the public has required and so scantily rewarded. Under existing circumstances, I am more surprised at the amount they have accomplished, than at what they have left undone, or but imperfectly done. With deserved encouragement and suitable facilities, they will faithfully and efficiently act their part. My only object, in thus briefly alluding to these schools, has been to bespeak for them the cordial support and fostering care of all who feel any interest in the cause of education. To these they are entitled, and with these properly and cheerfully bestowed, they will accomplish all that the most sanguine can expect ; but if they are withheld, or grudgingly rendered, they must continue, as in many cases they *have* continued, *necessary evils*, or places in which habits are formed which must be subsequently eradicated, or exist to mar the character through subsequent life.

VII. *The multiplicity of studies introduced and partially pursued*, is another obstacle to the greater usefulness of our schools. Our common schools should afford the means for thorough instruction in all those branches which are of indispensable importance to the man of business.

It is much better that a *few* of the more useful branches be *well understood*, than that a mere *smattering* of *many* be obtained. Yet there is in the community a very strong tendency on the part of parents, teachers and pupils, to attend to some of the higher studies, to the partial or absolute neglect of the more common and useful branches. This tendency should be counteracted. No scholar should be *encouraged* or *allowed* to omit, or lightly pass over the common branches of an English education, in order to devote time to the more ornamental, but less useful studies. Reading, Spelling, Writing, Arithmetic, Grammar and Geography, should not be made secondary, either to Chemistry, Astronomy, Botany, Geology, Zoology, Phrenology, or Animal Magnetism! But how often are they thus regarded, and as such how sadly are they neglected! An experienced and popular teacher once related the following case, which tends to confirm the statement we have just made.

Said he, "A young lady came to place herself under my instruction, with the intention of becoming a teacher. Upon examination, I found her exceedingly deficient in the common branches of an English education, but perceiving, from her appearance, that she had a course of study marked out in her own mind, I asked her what branches she wished to pursue while under my care. She replied, '*I wish to study Chemistry, Philosophy, Astronomy, and French, paint a mourning piece, conjecture a map, and learn BIGOTRY.*'" Thinking that the last named sufficiently abounded without culture, the teacher very readily *conjectured* that there was a mistake in the nomenclature, and upon subsequent inquiry he was induced to substitute *Botany* for *Bigotry*. And thus it



is that *young ladies*, and *young gentlemen* too, sometimes attend to studies, with the mere names of which they are not familiar. If, instead of this, they would apply their minds and devote their time to the pursuit of more solid and really indispensable branches, and acquire *thorough* elementary knowledge, they would have a sure and valuable basis upon which to erect any desirable superstructure.

VIII. *A strong tendency to superficial study*, is a serious obstacle to the greater usefulness of our schools.

With many, a scholar's proficiency is estimated from the number of pages *passed over* or *committed to memory*, rather than from the actual information obtained. More is thought of the repetition of *mere words* than of the acquisition of *ideas*. Parents, too often, measure the teacher's capacity and fitness to instruct, from the number of times their children are required *to perform*,—I can hardly say *recite*,—each day. We can, many of us, remember the time when a teacher's popularity depended, principally, upon the fact, that he heard his pupils read *four times*, daily, though it might be of less real advantage to them, than it would be to a parrot to repeat "*Pretty Poll*," regularly, morning, noon and night ;—for while the parrot may attract attention and procure a subsistence by his loquacious power, the children are in a fair way to forfeit both.

Those teachers, who first attempted an innovation in this particular, must have possessed a great amount of perseverance and independence,—and it would not hazard much to conjecture that they were obliged every succeeding year to seek a new spot whereon to live, with the invaluable privilege of "*boarding round*," and, at the

expiration of their term of service, receive some ten dollars per month "in full of all demands," with the oft-repeated and gratuitous intimations that their new notions were working destruction to themselves and the schools.

We have reason to rejoice that our professional lot has fallen on better times, when a teacher may, if he thinks proper, require his pupils to read but once each day, or even twice each week, without any danger from a parental insurrection. But I intended, more particularly, to speak of the disposition to *simplify* every study. Many of our modern school-books tend to favor this inclination, by attempting to explain too much, and thus leaving the young tyro, but little, if any, inducement or occasion to think for himself, and almost entirely removing the necessity for that mental discipline, which should, as it were, constitute the chief aim and end of all school instruction. If books and teachers do all the thinking for scholars, they will, as a matter of course, do none for themselves.

It may very well answer to facilitate and expedite the movement of physical bodies, as much as possible, but to supply the mind with any foreign propelling power, rather than call into action that contained within itself, will impair its elasticity and efficiency, just in proportion to the amount applied.

The mind should be inured to patient and persevering thought,—should be trained to close and scrutinizing research,—it should, indeed, be made to depend, mainly, upon its own powers and resources, and is but little worth only when thus dependent. We may construct our railroads from city to city, and from state to state, and thus very properly and profitably facilitate intercourse

and trade,—but a railroad to knowledge is about as practicable as a railroad to the moon.

But many of our school-books tend, by a *redundancy* of explanations, rules and solutions, to excuse the mind from all that *reasoning*, *research* and *inquisitiveness*, so essential to its healthful, active and influential existence.

A scholar, for instance, goes over a treatise on Arithmetic, and imagines he understands all about it because he finds the explanations numerous and intelligible. Instead of applying his mind directly and closely to the examples and questions, and, by a thorough *analysis*, ascertaining all their properties, he gives his attention, principally, to the rules and solutions of the book, and “takes it for granted,” that as he understands them he knows everything necessary for him to know.

Let two boys be examined in Arithmetic,—one having used a text book abounding in rules and explanatory notes, and the other nearly the reverse. It will be found that the former has placed his entire dependence upon the rules, and, that consequently he is unable to do anything without the aid of a given rule;—while the latter having relied, in a degree, upon his own powers, will be much better prepared to explain and solve general questions and problems. The following anecdote will illustrate this position:—

Says a teacher, “A lad of 17 years, once said to me, with an air of much importance, ‘*I went through Daboll’s Arithmetic three times last winter, sir, and I can do any sum in the hardest ciphering book you can bring.*’ I did not dispute him, for I did not doubt that he could, *mechanically*, obtain the answer to almost any question he could find in a book, set down under a *specific rule*.

But thinking he, like many others, had *made figures without thinking*, I asked him the following question : ‘ *What will 20 lbs. of beef come to at 10 cents per lb., provided two thirds of it is fat ?*’ After a moment of hesitation, he said,—‘ If you will tell me what the *fat* comes to, I will do the sum.’ At this I smiled, and he said, with considerable spirit, ‘ If you will tell me what *rule* it comes under, I will do it.’ I continued silent, for his ludicrous embarrassment prevented my speaking at the instant, when he with great earnestness said, ‘ *It is an unfair sum ; I never saw such a sum in the book in my life.*’ ”

And thus it is with many,—*they do not examine, they do not think* ; they have not yet learned that *thinking* has any connection with education. The unfortunate lad, just alluded to, had never accustomed his mind to seek for *the why and the wherefore*. No, that *two thirds fat* he could not digest,—he could not put it under any rule ;—indeed he had never before seen a question that had any *fat* in it, and he was entirely unacquainted with the process of “ *trying out* ” the fat.

But one might infer, from reading some of our school-book advertisements and recommendations, that a new and improved highway to knowledge had been opened. As many of the quack medicines of the present day are equally well suited to check maladies of every name, in every clime, and propose to effect cures of incurable diseases “ without change of diet or manner of living,”—so these books will answer alike well for all schools and scholars, and will advance with astonishing and equal rapidity and thoroughness, the active and the stupid,—the genius and the dunce,—without any labor on the part

of the teacher or pupil. And these books are scattered throughout the land, and there is reason to fear that they will continue to exist, unless, perchance, the discovery and publication of the method of instruction pursued by some "old Parr" in the good old times of Noah, shall cause a general expurgation !

But against this diluting and simplifying process, so common and so pernicious, I feel constrained to enter my protest. I must not be understood as objecting "*in toto*" to rules and explanations. Some are needed, but there is greater danger from the multiplicity, than from the paucity of them. It is generally better, that directions, when needed, be given by the living teacher, and even by him in such manner as shall draw upon the pupil's own resources, and cause him *to think*. Experience and observation will establish the fact, that those truths and principles in science which are attained by *continued, unaided, persevering* application, are most *clearly, permanently and usefully* fixed upon the mind.

Here we may suggest that the manner of conducting recitations is, too frequently, such as not to elicit much thought. The mere responding to certain stereotyped questions by giving certain stereotyped answers, constitutes but a small part of a good recitation. Yet in many schools the slightest deviation, in word or order, from the questions of the book, will seriously affect a recitation, if not entirely disconcert the class. If teachers would encourage their pupils *to ask*, as well as *answer* questions during a recitation, and state points which are not plain to them, the happiest results would be experienced. The pupil should be taught not to feel satisfied with the mere "*say so*" of the book, unless he sees

"*the why and the wherefore ;*" and he should be urged, with becoming freedom, to make any suitable inquiry or expression of thought pertinent to the passing exercise or recitation. It is well, often, that each member of a class be required to ask some question respecting the lesson, while on the recitation seat. The adoption of this course would, probably, lead to a more careful and thoughtful preparation of lessons, and would induce children to seek for proper expressions wherewith to make known their feelings and queries.

IX. *The early withdrawal of scholars from school, is an injury to the schools.*

It is very frequently the case that children are taken from school at the age of 12 years, and even earlier, and receive very few, if any, opportunities for instruction, subsequently. There are so many branches of industry in which children may be somewhat profitably employed, that an inducement is held out to forsake the paths of science for those of wealth. The temptation presented is, too often, yielded to, and the time which so peculiarly belongs to the schools, is employed on the farm, in the workshop or warehouse. But to every reflecting mind, this must appear an act of great injustice to the pupils, to the schools and to the community. Children who leave school thus early cannot have obtained a thorough elementary knowledge, nor have acquired those correct habits of thought and discipline so desirable for the man of business, or for the good citizen. They are taken from school at the very time they begin, in any adequate manner, to appreciate their privileges, and to comprehend the value of the knowledge they may acquire. The attention of parents and teachers should be



directed to this point, or, ere long, it will be considered almost a *disparagement* for boys and girls to attend school after they have arrived at the age of 12 years, and in some places it is so considered at the present time. But I must leave this subject, hoping that a mere allusion to it may be productive of some good, or at least, secure for it the consideration of some who have not yet given it a thought.

I will now proceed to name some particulars in which the influence of parents is an obstacle to the greater usefulness of public schools.

1. *A neglect on the part of parents to visit, occasionally, the schools to which they send their children.*

Parents and teachers are engaged in one and the same cause, and should labor with perfect understanding, good feeling and harmony. But how often are the good impressions of the school-room worse than obliterated or counteracted by the scenes and influences of the fireside! Many parents consider their own responsibility fully met when they have provided a school-room, employed an instructor and sent their children to school. Indispensable, as these certainly are, they by no means cover the whole ground of duty. Children are often sent to school month after month, and season after season, without being once cheered by the visit of a parent. This ought not so to be. If parents would make it an object to spend an hour, occasionally, in the school-room, they would not only find their own interest increasing, but they would cause a much greater interest and consequent improvement in their children. It is a mistake, no less injurious than common, that school laws and school committees relieve parents from all care and responsibility in

the education of their children. This should be corrected. Teachers, committees and parents have each highly responsible, though somewhat different duties to perform, and yet they all have, or should have, the same general end in view ;—each having peculiar duties, yet each, in a measure, dependent upon the others. If the peculiar and appropriate duties of either are neglected, or but partially performed, the whole must suffer. The cheerful and hearty co-operation of parents is as essential to the best good of a school, as are the dew, the rain and the sunshine to the growth of the vegetable kingdom. The want of the former will as surely tend to cause an intellectual dearth as will that of the latter literal famine.

A school-house may be constructed in the best and most approved style;—a competent teacher may be furnished, whose efforts for the good of the school may be vigorous, well-timed and unceasing;—children may be thoroughly supplied with books and sent to school with constancy, and yet much will be wanting to give success and vitality, if a feeling of cold indifference exists on the part of parents and guardians. It is, comparatively, an easy matter to cause children to come together within the walls of a school-room, but to excite and keep alive an active, healthful and uniform interest in the studies and exercises of the school, requires the combined wisdom and hearty co-operation of parents and teachers. Instructors need generous support and encouragement, and children need and should receive, the influence and assistance of interested and sympathizing parents.

We fear that very few properly consider the *duties* and *trials* and *perplexities*, of the faithful and devoted

teacher. How often do parents, who have but two or three children, exclaim, "How glad I shall be when the school begins!" Yet parents will send their children "by the dozen," to school, and never enter themselves, nor bestow a sympathizing thought upon the poor teacher, who, "himself against a host," is obliged to control and instruct the collected "dozens" of the district.

An instructor has, as it were, a large family to manage, composed of many smaller families, differing in *disposition*, *talents* and *attainments*,—subjected, perhaps, to as many different kinds of home-discipline as are the homes numerous from which they come. These he must govern, classify and instruct, having regard to the greatest general good. The idle and indifferent he must arouse and urge onward,—the diffident and distrustful he must encourage by persevering kindness and gentleness,—the more forward, perhaps, need a check,—many require oft-repeated *direction* and *correction*, and sometimes a strong external application of the "*lignum vitæ*" may seem absolutely indispensable. To the last named, however, we think resort is too often made, and we doubt not that a good degree of interest on the part of parents, in particulars which we *have* named and which we *may* name, would almost entirely relieve teachers from the, oftentimes, painful necessity of inflicting corporal punishment. If parents and teachers would exercise a little more caution and *say only what they mean, and mean just what they say, and manifest a firm, decided, unyielding, though kind determination to have every requirement strictly regarded and implicitly answered*, an immense amount of trouble might be prevented.

Oft-repeated and continued scolding and whipping in a

family or school, will only tend to make *bad* children *worse*, and *good* children *indifferent*.

A blacksmith brought up his son, to whom he was very severe, to his own trade. One day the old Vulcan was attempting to harden a cold chisel, which he had made of foreign steel, but could not succeed. At last the youth, who was standing near, willing to impart knowledge which he had obtained by bitter experience, exclaimed, with an expression full of faith, "Horsewhip it, father, if that won't harden it nothing will." That boys are susceptible of this *hardening* process admits of far less doubt than does the case of the chisel.

On the question of corporal punishment I would not be misunderstood. I am free to confess that I think the rod has been *too frequently* used, but I am also free to express my belief that the day has not yet arrived in which the highest good of the schools demands that its use shall be wholly and universally abandoned and prohibited. When that happy day will dawn I cannot predict; but I am certain, if it *ever* dawns, it will be hailed with as much joy by teachers as by any other class of citizens. But with the present condition of society, and under existing circumstances, there are cases in which the good of a school, and the good of the offender against salutary regulations, demand a severe application of the rod. Some teachers may use it *too freely, and too frequently*. In our attempt to prevent this, let us not rush to an opposite and equally pernicious extreme.

I would say that the rod should never be used hastily, nor passionately. There *are teachers* and there *are parents*, who, for every slight offence or deviation of a child,

fly, as it were, to the rod, and with passionate violence apply it. This is certainly wrong, and should be discountenanced. The rod should not be applied on every occasion, nor for every offence, but the infrequency of its use should contribute, in no small degree, to its efficacy. When resorted to it should be done with calm determination, and the whole case should be so represented and explained, with all its attendant circumstances, that the school, and the offender himself, shall see and feel that the teacher is about to perform an unpleasant and painful *duty*,—a duty, from which he shall never shrink when called upon by circumstances to act. After suitable comment upon the nature and particulars of the case, the rod should be applied with such a degree of severity as shall be necessary *to subdue* the guilty one and strongly impress *upon him*, and *through him* upon the school, that “*The way of the transgressor is,*” and always will be, “*hard.*” This course, followed by a kindness on the part of the teacher which shall convince that nought has been done “in malice,” will, almost invariably, produce the desired result.

Good order and submission to wholesome regulations must be insisted on in every well managed school and family. These should be secured by mild and kind means, if possible, but should not, in any instance, be sacrificed to a frequently conceived and advanced, though I think *erroneous* opinion, that the use of the rod is *too brutal*. If boys so far depart from a proper course as to allow *brutal passions* to gain the mastery, and under their control “set at nought” all good requirements and salutary laws, they should be met and conquered by such

arguments as the existing and ruling motives may seem to demand.

I have thus enlarged on this question, because I feel that the very *opposition* of those who object to the use of the rod *at any time, or under any circumstances*, is in itself a serious obstacle to the best good of the school.

2. *The neglect of parents to secure the constant attendance of their children.* This is one of the greatest obstacles against which our schools have to contend. When a boy goes to learn a trade, or enters a store, it is expected, *as a matter of course*, that he will always be "at his post," and sickness is almost the only satisfactory reason for a day's absence. Nor does any one consider this hard, or unreasonable. But attendance at school, is often viewed in a very different light. It is not unfrequently the case that boys and girls are sent to school when they have nothing else to do. The school is regarded as a convenient place in which to keep children "out of the way." They are consequently sent one day and kept away the next, as convenience or circumstances may make it desirable, and not as the real good of the children demands.

Now a very little reflection must convince any one that such a course is extremely unwise and wrong. Not only the absentee, but his class, and even the whole school of which he is a member, suffer from this course. A pupil who is often absent, cannot, with spirit or interest, engage in his studies when present. His class-mates are in advance of him and the attractive chain is broken. If called upon to recite, he is unprepared, and, by his disconnected and lifeless answers, he becomes a *clog* to the whole class. Yet is it not true that most complaints against teachers for incompetency proceed from the parents of



such children? Teachers *are incompetent* to impart any new light to such comet-like pupils ;—comet-like in some respect, but most unlike in others ;—they appear and disappear, but when and how they will re-appear, no mortal can conjecture !

Parents should know that the best of teachers cannot advance their children unless they are regular and constant in their attendance. There are cases, I admit, in which the absence of pupils is almost absolutely necessary, but such instances are extremely rare. Let all parents make the same effort to secure the constant attendance of their children at school, as do some to secure their attendance at some dancing school, and we feel assured that neither heat nor cold, rain nor snow, party nor pleasure excursions would operate to make so many vacant seats in our schools. In regard to attendance upon schools for instruction in some of the mere accomplishments of life, parents should not be more particular than in regard to those of a more practical and useful nature.

I was about to speak of *unseasonable* attendance and the habit of leaving school before the regular hour for dismissal, but the consequences, in kind so nearly resemble those of the evil we have just considered, that I shall not enlarge, but will merely suggest that many of the habits and evils proceeding from a want of regularity and punctuality through all the business of life *may*, and often *do*, have their origin, directly or indirectly, in the evils we have alluded to. If so, with what earnestness should we endeavor to arouse parents and all concerned to a proper consideration of the subject !

3. *The habit, with many parents, of listening to and believing all the complaints of their children and censuring*

*the instructor in their presence*, tends greatly to impair the teacher's influence and to diminish the usefulness of the school.

Here I would not be understood to say that teachers always adopt a course above censure, or that they *always* do things in the best or most prudent manner. They are but men, with the infirmities of men, and are liable to err. But in the formation and execution of their plans, they must be allowed to pursue their own course, nor should they be expected to coincide with the views and wishes of all. This would be impossible, as there are widely differing views among their patrons.

Parents are often guilty, unconsciously I doubt not, of causing much injury to schools by manifesting an interest in all the little antipathies which their children may have contracted, and by sympathizing with them in all the little wrongs, real or imaginary, to which they have been subjected.

Probably there is no individual, whose motives and actions are so often and so grossly misconceived and misrepresented, as are those of the school teacher. This, we may readily see, arises from the very nature of his employment. He has to do with the mind and passions in all their various *workings*, and that at an age when reason and prudence have but a very limited sway. As his pupils differ in disposition and understanding, so his efforts to secure order and obedience, and his incentives to exertion, must vary. To one a mere look, or word of reproof, will be as effectual as the most severe discipline to another; and yet is not the faithful, prudent and skilful teacher sometimes severely censured, and accused of partiality, while endeavoring to adapt his mode of disci-

pline to the peculiar disposition and temperament of the offender?

A conscientious and wise instructor will consider it an important part of his duty, so to study the character and peculiar disposition of each pupil, as shall enable him to pursue that course of discipline which shall most readily and effectually secure the reform or best good of every one. But from the want of proper consideration on the part of many parents and guardians this becomes a fruitful source of complaint and fault-finding.

A teacher may pursue that course which experience and observation dictate as the best, and which an interest in the welfare and improvement of his pupils prompts him to pursue, and while thus acting and thus influenced by the purest motives, he is perhaps represented by one as being *too severe*, by another *too lax*, and by many as *partial* in his discipline; *this* parent complains that *his* children have not studies enough, and *that* because *his* has too many. And whence comes all this complaint with parents? Does it proceed from frequent visits to the school-room and from actual observation while there? By no means, but from the distorted statements of interested and *ex-parte* witnesses,—the pupils themselves,—and many a poor teacher is *tried, found guilty, condemned* and almost *executed*, without being afforded the least opportunity for self-defence,—and perchance, being all the while unconscious of the crimes or deviations for which he is under sentence.

But, says one, shall parents always submit to what the teacher does? Is he always in the right and children in the wrong? Certainly not: the teacher is not infallible; but does he not, or ought he not best to understand his

own business ? At all events, will it always answer to rely on the pupil's *judgment* ? Will he not often be influenced by motives similar to those of the lad, who, when asked by his instructor, in what way he should prefer to be punished, replied with much readiness, "*If you please, sir, according to the Italian system of penmanship, heavy strokes up, down ones light.*"

If parents really feel that the teacher has erred, and their children have been injured or neglected, would it not be better to go directly to him, and with a spirit of candor and kindness, make known their feelings ? Possibly they have not been rightfully informed, or perhaps, a false coloring has been given, or some circumstances withheld, and upon hearing the *whole* story, they may become fully satisfied that no injustice or wrong has been intended or committed. In most cases such would undoubtedly be the result.

I do not intend to assert that most children *design* to make false statements, but they are so easily biassed and prejudiced, that they very frequently imagine many things which exist only in imagination. A *wrong word*, an *improper emphasis*, a *slight omission or addition*, or even an *altered look or tone*, often very materially affect an account.

Parents, probably, are not always aware of the nature and extent of their influence, directly and indirectly, upon their children, who are prone to like or dislike what their parents like or dislike, and endeavor to express the same sentiments that they hear expressed at the fireside, though not always correctly. Few realize how many notions and prejudices children form under the influence of those with whom they spend most of their time.

A child being asked by her Sabbath school teacher "Who killed Abel?" promptly answered "Gen. Jackson!" In one of those periods of high political excitement, (the influence of which cannot be otherwise than deleterious upon the young) she had heard so much said against the General, that she thought, as a matter of course, that he was a *general murderer*, and the only man bad enough to commit the *first homicide*!

4. *The unreasonable, or extravagant expectations, and consequent disappointment of parents*, sometimes produce an apathy, if not feelings of positive opposition towards the school.

Every parent wishes *his* children to be *first rate* scholars, and if they do not become such, the entire blame is cast upon the poor teacher, without, in the least, considering how far circumstances may justify this. Now it is sometimes the case that a boy may attend school month after month and receive every possible attention from his instructor, and yet make but little, if any, perceptible progress. It does not necessarily follow that the teacher is unfaithful, or incompetent. The best of teachers cannot make *first rate* scholars from *third* or *fourth rate* stock. To make a good house it is not only necessary to have good stock, but also to have that stock entirely at the disposal of a skilful workman. And so with the making of good scholars,—the teacher must have good material and the general management of that material. But it frequently happens that a boy of very ordinary abilities, and those blunted and stunted by neglect, or mismanagement in his physical training, is sent to school *occasionally*, and if he does not learn rapidly and make a "right smart"

scholar, it is entirely owing to the unfaithfulness or inefficiency of the instructor ! But it should be known that no mortal influence can cause such children to improve under such circumstances, or create life or replenish the strength for a boy whose entire energies and vigor have been tasked to their utmost in counteracting the indulgence of an excessive appetite or the gross abuse of his physical nature in any way.

5. *The want of co-operation on the part of parents and teachers to secure correct habits of action and expression out of school*, tends to impair the usefulness of schools. Improper habits or indulgences allowed, directly or tacitly, away from the school-room, will in some manner develop themselves in school, and that unfavorably to the good of the school. The moral character and finer feelings of the heart require much attention and cultivation. Children should be induced to realize their dependence upon their Creator and their unceasing obligations to Him for all the blessings and privileges they enjoy. They should be taught to respect the aged, to love and obey their parents and teachers, and to treat all with becoming civility and merited respect. They should be aided to cherish a kind and conciliating spirit, a strong regard for truth and purity of thought and utterance, and a sincere desire to know and perform certain duties to their Creator, to their parents and teachers, and to all with whom they may associate. Parents and teachers should in every suitable manner labor to form in children a high and elevated tone of moral feeling and worth,—an abhorrence for all that is unbecoming and grovelling in its nature and tendencies, and a deep and strong love for every thing that is “ lovely



and of good report." The whole subject rests with parents and teachers, and is it not worth their hearty, untiring and united efforts ?

But I have already said too much, perhaps, of parental co-operation. Its great importance must be my only apology. If any parties should labor with "united heart and hand," surely parents and teachers should so do. Their one object and aim should be so to train up and instruct children that they shall become useful, intelligent and moral members of society. The deplorable effects of complaint and fault-finding, so common in some communities, should never reach the teacher unless on ground of the strongest reason ; for how often, like an iceberg, do they chill his ardor, and literally freeze up all his kindest emotions ! He needs sympathy and encouragement, and with them properly and seasonably bestowed, if he possesses manly feelings and a noble heart, he will almost be strengthened to outdo himself. It has been said with much truth, *that as is the teacher so will be the school*. It may with equal truth be said, *that as are the parents so will be the teacher*. Generous, active, interested, intelligent and sympathizing parents will exert a most powerful and happy influence upon the instructor of their children,—while sordid, ignorant, negligent and fault-finding parents will almost paralyze the energies of the best teachers, and render well-directed, and otherwise successful efforts, powerless. How important, then, that parents become acquainted with the teacher and friend of their children ! How important, that with all diligence they strive so to govern themselves in "very word and deed" as shall beget in their children a feeling of confidence in and respect for their teacher !

But I have detained you too long. A subject of such vital interest to the welfare and prosperity of our schools, presents so many points worthy of serious consideration, that it is hard to know *how* and *where* to begin, and still harder *how* and *where* to end. I believe, as I have previously intimated, that our free school system is *the system* for our country, and that its unobstructed operation will produce the happiest and most satisfactory results. Let us, then, strive to cherish it, and labor diligently for the removal of all obstacles to its perfect success.

Most will assent to the truth and importance of many points to which I have, thus imperfectly, alluded, and will readily ask what shall be done to remedy or remove the evils. In answer to such an inquiry, I would say that most of these evils proceed from a thoughtlessness or want of consideration, and the only way to secure their removal, is to present them to the view of those concerned until an active interest shall be excited against them. Teachers, and others who possess an interest in the subject, must be the willing pioneers in the work of improvement. Teachers, especially, must be active. They from the very position they occupy, see and feel the operation of the evils named, as none but teachers can; let them never cease to talk and labor and write, until others shall be aroused to a proper examination of the whole matter.

I would suggest, as a very good way for creating a proper feeling, that teachers invite their patrons,—the parents and guardians of their pupils,—to assemble at the school-room, and in a plain, familiar lecture, present to their consideration existing evils and obstacles. Who

can estimate the amount of good that may be done in towns during a winter, by occasional meetings, at which a lecture, followed by familiar discussion, shall constitute the exercises of the evening? Would not this course, more than any other, bring the whole subject home to those concerned, and awaken a common and general interest?

In conclusion, I would urge my professional brethren well to consider the high and responsible nature of the duties devolving upon them. To us, my friends, in a peculiar sense, is entrusted the duty of determining the character and influence of those who will soon act important parts on the busy stage of life. To our charge and training are committed the tender and pliable minds of childhood; and upon our efforts and influence depends much of their future character. Fidelity on our part may lead them on to spheres of usefulness and happiness, or our neglect may cast them upon society enemies alike to wholesome regulations and useful employment. "What manner of men," then, ought we to be, from whom children receive so much of their moral and intellectual training? Surely we are engaged in a great and noble work,—a work which demands all the wisdom, the prudence, the devotion and the energy, which it is possible for man to possess. It behoves us to labor "with all diligence," and search out and remove all obstacles to our complete success; and, though, when we look upon the immortal minds under our care, and consider that every word, and look, and action of our every day life, may tell for weal or woe in a risen generation, our spirits may well nigh fail, and poor humanity exclaim

“Who is sufficient for this work?”—still let us press onward and upward, putting our trust in our God and the children's God, ever praying and laboring that we may be the humble instruments of preparing minds for a high and manly sphere of useful influence in this world ; and that we may sow such seeds, only, as shall spring up and flourish in perennial bloom and beauty beyond the shores of time.

## LECTURE IV.

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# SOME OF THE DANGERS OF TEACHERS.

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IN all the employments of life, and in every branch of business in which we may be engaged, we are liable to fall into errors of misconception, or of practice, which experience alone will correct ; and which this oftentimes fails of entirely effecting. From this common lot of imperfect humanity, the teacher is by no means exempt ; if, indeed, he be not, from the nature of his employment, more fearfully exposed than others. He is in danger from causes existing within himself, and he is in danger from the influence of external causes which he may have less power to modify, but which are still, to some degree, under his control. It is of some of those dangers to which teachers are particularly exposed, that I propose at this time, briefly to speak ;—dangers, which in my

limited experience, I have been made to feel are not altogether imaginary,—dangers few in comparison, it may be, with those which others have discovered, who have fathomed the depths, and scaled the heights of the teacher's experience.

I. *The teacher is in danger of forgetting, to some extent, the silent influence of his own example upon those committed to his charge.*

We too often forget, in our intercourse with children, that they are children ;—that they are governed less by *theory* than by *example* ;—that their sympathies are easily excited ;—that there is a sympathetic chain, binding them to their teacher, which they are never able fully to sunder. How important then, that this chain should be the silken cord of love, and not the debasing and repulsive bond of fear or hatred. Philosophy and experience establishes the truth of the Prussian maxim, that “as is the teacher, so is the school.” A stupid, selfish, incompetent master, will most assuredly run down the best school in New England ; and this deterioration will be in direct proportion to the length of time, such school is permitted to remain under his influence. While, on the other hand, an intelligent, conscientious, well prepared teacher, will as assuredly lift up to a level with himself the most backward school in the state. So true is it, that all streams flow level with their founts.

We are too much inclined to look away from ourselves for causes, with which we have a more intimate connection. Children are creatures of imitation. Their minds, their feelings, and their impulses, are all easily controlled, guided; and made to assimilate to the pattern which they



have constantly before them. Its silent influence is ever felt and heeded. Who has not witnessed, at times, the apparent utter impossibility of leading scholars to attend quietly and silently to their duties in school ; when all efforts on the part of the teacher, to direct the energies of his pupils and quell the rising tumult, tend but to increase the gathering storm. It is in vain, and worse than in vain, for the teacher at such times to attempt to force onward his plans, however judiciously they may have been formed, or however well they may have succeeded under other circumstances. Let him pause and reflect, if reflect he can in the midst of such excitement ; let him look within himself, and see how much of his present troubles may have originated in his own feelings, if not in his own acts,—how much of the impatience of his scholars may be attributed to his own impatience,—how much indeed, of the day's disasters, might have been read by an attentive observer in his own morning's face.

“He, who would have friends, must show *himself* friendly ;” and the teacher, who would have kind, affectionate, and obedient pupils,—manly in their deportment, and circumspect in their behavior,—must possess in himself all those desirable *mental* and *moral* qualities which will beget the same in others. A teacher, who would exert a good moral and spiritual influence upon his school, should be firm but gentle, dignified but not arrogant. If he wishes to cultivate a domineering, haughty, and turbulent disposition, rather than one of ready acquiescence, and heartfelt obedience, let him be dictatorial and assuming in his own deportment,—always speak in the imperative mode,—never condescend to ask, but always to command, and he will most assuredly succeed ; not that

teachers should not command and be obeyed, but there is as much difference in the different modes of obtaining this result, as there is between obedience and disobedience ; and while the firm, but mild and gentle course, will in most cases prove successful, the haughty and arrogant will almost as certainly fail.

True dignity of character will always be associated with artlessness and simplicity of manner. Children are keen observers, and they shrink instinctively from artificial austerity, or laugh at its absurdity. A teacher, who should move about the school-room with a haughty, domineering manner, might talk loud and long about moral duties and correct deportment to little purpose. So with the tones of the voice in which he addresses his pupils. If he is loud and boisterous in his manner, and sharp and crabbed in his speech, attempting to win by assuming an unnatural and dogmatical tone of authority ; he shuts up the hearts of his children,—awakens in their breasts a spirit of repulsion, if not a feeling of disgust,—the spell by which they were bound is broken, and “ they will not listen to the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely ;”—while a naturalness of manner, joined with an honest frankness of speech, will win the confidence, love, and respect of the child or the man, and induce him to listen calmly and patiently to truths unpalatable in themselves, and which under other circumstances might be resented or repelled.

If the teacher has any sly ways of detecting scholars in their mischief ; if he resorts to stratagem or artifice to circumvent their plans ; or does any thing which is cunning or deceitful ; he teaches cunning and deception to the children. If he drills them on certain passages or

questions, to be used on certain occasions to show them off to advantage ; and gives that exhibition as a fair sample of their general scholarship ; he teaches deception. It is a practical lesson, not soon forgotten, and an evil is committed, for which no present good can in any sense be considered an equivalent. A teacher should never resort to any artifice, but ever be distinguished for uprightness and sincerity of character,—in the minutest particular fair and honorable,—transparent as the thinnest crystal. In vain will he strive to inspire his pupils with a love for truth, unless he is inspired with a love for it himself. He, who governs himself best, will always govern his school best.

Example is all powerful in its influence upon the community. If it be true with adults, that “evil communications corrupt good manners ;” how emphatically true must it be of children, at that peculiar period of life, in which of all others impressions are the most readily and most permanently made ; when example never fails to influence and help to form the character, while precept may fall powerless upon the ear, or fail entirely to affect the heart. When the teacher witnesses, as he at times will, the impatient, irritable disposition of his scholars ;—the outbursting of this impatience, it may be, in action if not in word, let him turn his thoughts homeward and inward, and see if he cannot there discover the first rippling of the stream, the impetuosity of whose swelling current he now finds it so difficult to control ;—if the tardy conception of the child, or his more than common excitability, has not been construed into a wilful stubbornness, or downright insubordination, until loud words and heavy blows serve but to increase the evil. Surely

the teacher needs to cultivate patience in himself, if he would see it flourish in others.

Intellectually, as well as morally, the school will resemble the teacher. Though there may be some minds that will soar above all obstacles, still the mass of pupils who give character to the school, will rarely rise higher than the fountain, whence they derive their mental supplies. If that fountain be circumscribed in its limits, possessing surface, it may be, but no depth, with no streams flowing in to give activity, energy, and life, to the little which it contains, then the supplies which it furnishes, must be comparatively small in quantity, and partake in quality of the mass, from which they are drawn. In other words, if the teacher is superficial in his attainments, with no deep-felt need, and strong aspirings for more,—though he may, in his own estimation, be possessed of all desirable knowledge, and like Goldsmith's schoolmaster, "e'en the story run that he can gauge," his scholars will be likely to partake of his own self-sufficiency, and like him be satisfied with small attainments. There is nothing, perhaps, more to be deprecated, than a feeling among scholars that they have arrived at the acme of all knowledge, and consequently possess no disposition to put forth further effort, and strive for higher and still higher attainments. One's efforts will always correspond to the standard which he has set up, either real or imaginary, and which it is his object to attain; and the pupil's ideal, will be the real standard of the teacher.

II. *In the teacher's eagerness to advance his pupils, there is danger of his resorting to motives addressed main-*

*ly to their selfish and sensual passions ; and thus strengthen, and render too active, those principles of our nature, which in most cases are too strong already.*

Appeals are frequently made to the emulation of children, by the bestowment of prizes, or otherwise rewarding successful effort ; a practice founded in error, as I think, and oftentimes productive of much evil. If education consisted in accumulating and storing up a certain amount of intellectual lumber, irrespective of the means employed to accomplish this end, then, indeed, it would become of little consequence what motives were used as incentives to action. But if education consists in the proper developement and training of all the faculties, giving to none an undue preponderance, but to each and all a due share of attention, then it becomes of the utmost importance, that no motive should be presented whose tendency would be to produce an undue development of a part, at the expense of the other faculties of the mind ; or, which should cultivate the intellectual at the expense of the moral powers. It can scarcely be less objectionable, to present any motive for exertion, like that of the bestowment of a prize, which would in any case be mistaken for the *end* or *object* of education, and that an end attainable only by the few, and not within the reach of the many.

If certain limits could be prescribed, attainable by all, and yet taxing alike the energies of all, then, indeed, the bestowment of prizes might not excite such deep feelings of envy and ill will among the several competitors, as ever must be excited, so long as all, who run, do not obtain the reward. It will be found in most cases, that the number really contending for the prize, will be very

few, in comparison with the whole ; and that the successful competitors, or all, who really strive, having considered the prize as the only good to be obtained, and having arrived at the ultimate end of all their hopes, will lose their interest, and relax their efforts, for the want of a sufficiently stimulating motive beyond this ; and, that the mass of pupils, who feel the utter impossibility of their succeeding, will manifest still less energy, and put forth less effort, than they would do were they not thus separated from their more fortunate companions ;—fortunate, as they will esteem them, either in the natural endowments with which they are favored, or the external circumstances by which they are surrounded. It may be said, that the instinct, or propensity of emulation, is implanted in us by nature, and should therefore be cultivated like any other natural endowment : so are the instincts of anger, pride, and the other selfish and sensual passions. They are given to us for wise purposes : we cannot rid ourselves of them if we would ; we should not if we could. But from some cause, they are too strong already, they need cultivating, but they need repressing rather than inflaming. If the conscience could be rendered so sensitive and active, as to keep pace with the ambition, there might be less danger ; but in our country, where the one is almost entirely neglected in our systems of education, while the other is stimulated to the highest degree by the whole framework of society, there is danger that the character may become an ill balanced one, and the community suffer in consequence.

It is time that this important subject, of employing the motive of rivalry in our schools, which has been so long discussed, should be finally and rightly settled. Much



depends upon the settlement of this question in reference to our moral and political character as a people,—much in reference to the ultimate predominance or subjection of that party spirit, and that love of power and distinction, which is fast taking the place of the patriotism which animated the fathers of our country. Much, very much depends upon the care of the instructors who sow the seed, as to what shall be the character of the harvest which may be reaped thirty years hence, when those boys now at school shall become the rulers and electors of the land. Their influence is fearful, nay, it may be decisive on the question, whether we shall then be enjoying the rich fruits of industry, virtue, and peace, or be palsied by vice, and torn and distracted by civil dissension.

Another motive, to which appeals are too frequently made, is that of fear; not that high and ennobling fear of doing wrong, because it is wrong, but the low, debasing and cowardly fear of bodily pain; received as a punishment, and oftentimes by the child, as an equivalent for wrong doing. Although it may be, and often is the duty of the teacher who would be faithful to his trust, to inflict bodily pain; yet its frequency should be avoided, and the fear of its infliction should never be allowed to become a predominant motive, to influence the child in the performance of his duties. A sensitiveness to bodily pain forms no part of the disinterested, self-sacrificing, and heroic character which ever excites our admiration; and should therefore be discouraged, rather than strengthened. A free and frequent use of the rod, at home or at school, renders the character pusillanimous, selfish, and tyrannical; it should be used only as a last resort; and then, not as a kind of offset or equivalent which atones

for the fault, but as a sure *consequence*, a final *result* of a course of evil. Punishments should be inflicted seriously, feelingly, and in love rather than in anger ; and the child should be made to see, and to feel, that they are thus inflicted ; for, they will fail of the desired effect, unless it be made evident to his mind, that the infliction, even of deserved punishment, is as painful to him who administers, as to him who receives the chastisement. Care should be taken, lest by a summary and hasty manner of punishing, the child be encouraged and trained in the practice of a course of deception, which it is ever as painful to witness as it is difficult to overcome ; a course which *may* prove successful in making a good *scholar*, but which will most assuredly make a bad man.

The teacher should be careful to make it felt by his pupils, that he is interested in their welfare. Without this real interest and sympathy on the part of the teacher, he will be unable to understand, or properly to estimate, the little trials, troubles, and difficulties, which the child meets in his progress. He will be likely to see faults where none exist ; to attribute to malice, or design, what might have been the result of ignorance, impulse, or thoughtlessness. Children oftener act from impulse than from premeditation ; from thoughtlessness than from design ; and yet how often is the wrong act put down as a crime, the wrong-doer treated as a criminal, while the intent to do evil, which alone constitutes crime in the eyes of all law, human and divine, is wanting. It is unreasonable to suppose that children are actuated by evil motives, when others are so obvious ; to treat them as guilty until they are proved to be innocent. Such a

course, of suspicion and distrust, will beget distrust and falsehood in others.

Another motive, to which it may be safe to appeal, and which may not be appealed to in vain, is a desire to prepare for the active duties of life ; a leading of children to feel, that they are not laboring for their parents, or their teacher ; nor for their own *present* good, so much, as for their *future* benefit. The pupil who is preparing to enter upon a professional life, is induced to apply himself more closely to his studies, knowing as he does, that permanent success depends mainly upon his own exertions. So the boy, who feels that he is to rely upon his own exertions for support, will be stimulated to greater diligence, if he is made to feel that success in life will depend much upon his excellence as a scholar. There is, or ought to be, no study pursued in any of our schools, which may not be recommended to the pupil for such reasons ; taking care that success in life be not measured by the false standard of pecuniary value, but by that elevation, excellence, and happiness, which should be its aim.

But the highest and noblest motive, and one to which it may ever be safe to appeal, is that of conscientiousness ; a deep, inwrought, and controlling desire of obeying the law of God, and of doing right because it is right. This principle is too much overlooked in all our systems of education. The conscientious scruples of the child are often treated with derision, if not with contempt by his associates. He sees the world around him acting from some one or more of the many ordinary motives by which men are influenced ; among which selfishness holds a prominent place, if, indeed, it be not, in many cases,

the predominant motive. He is constantly beset by the same temptations. No wonder that they should prove too strong for his power of resistance, strengthened as they are by the example of those around him. The wonder is that the still, small voice of conscience is ever heard, or when heard, is not stifled by the discordant sounds about him. It should be our aim, as teachers or parents, to correct this state of things, to take the side of conscience, and point out what is right and wrong ; and so to train and enlighten this inward monitor and judge, that the question of right shall always be suggested in the mind of the child, whenever he is tempted to the commission of any improper action.

I am more and more convinced that learning for the love of it ;—for the pleasure which every new acquisition gives ;—a conscientious discharge of duty, and a deep sense of right ; are the motives most likely to produce the happiest results, unmixed with that which is evil ; and, that if they are properly appreciated and fostered, they will be found to be sufficiently powerful incentives to action ;—and, that we should seldom appeal to fear, or an unholy ambition, into which emulation too often degenerates, when too much excited.

III. *Teachers are in danger of yielding too readily to untried schemes, designed for the advancement of education.*

Strange as it may seem, this most difficult of all employments, of training aright the youthful mind, is felt by the community generally, as one in which they are perfectly competent to give advice, and where they consider the experience of the teacher of little value ; hence,

visionary minds are constantly devising new plans to do the old work, and substituting the vagaries of their own imaginations, for the more certain results of experience.

Practice and theory are very different things ; and the teacher should beware, how he disregards the teachings of the one, in his eager search for the other. He should be constantly building upon his own experience, a theory of his own ; incorporating into it, of course, any suggestions which he may receive from abroad, but never relying *solely* upon the invention of others. He should originate or form his own plans to suit the circumstances of the case ; for however well the same plan might answer for two teachers, it will hardly be possible to find two schools so nearly alike, that the same system would operate equally well in both ; hence the teacher who would be successful, should never be a copyist.

Surely we live in an age of innovation, if not of improvement ; and I am far from believing that there is not much of improvement, in what we term innovation. Change and a desire for change, are the prevailing propensities of the age ; old landmarks are being removed, and new principles and new doctrines are professedly evolved. The great danger in all this is a tendency to the other extreme, a fondness for innovation, and for things that are novel, for novelty's sake ; from an impatience of all restraint. There is a disposition, where it is seen that ancient and venerated institutions contain some wrong principle, and consequent corrupt practices, to bring every thing belonging to them, whether *good* or *bad*, under the verdict of reprobation. It is so in respect to schools and school discipline. At one time we are gravely told, that the use of the rod is a relict of barba-

rism ; the resort only of real or would-be tyrants ; and that soft words, honied expressions, and appeals to the pride or ambition of the pupil are the only rational means to be employed, to ensure obedience. And, anon, after an ephemeral existence, the last named wonderful discovery becomes more beautiful in *theory* than in practice, and *cuffs* and *pinches* are made a favorite resort, to avoid the humiliating concession of an utter abandonment of the principle. Again, systems of school discipline and instruction are invented, designed to be universal in their application ; based upon the no less absurd assumption, that all schools and all scholars are alike ; and that the same system will prove alike successful in the hands of all. All such plans are as sure to fail, as that "Providence has determined that human minds should differ from each other, and for the very purpose of giving variety and interest to this busy scene of life. Now if it were possible for a teacher so to plan his operations, as to send his pupils forth upon the community, formed on the same model as if they were made by machinery ; he would do so much towards spoiling one of the wisest of the plans which the Almighty has formed for making this world a happy scene. Let it be the teacher's aim to *co-operate with*, not vainly to attempt to *thwart*, the designs of Providence, ever remembering that it is his province to *cultivate*, not to *create*."\*

Again, there are some persons so wedded to the old paths, such ardent lovers of ancient usage, that they are disposed to look with suspicion upon any course in which *they* have not been accustomed to walk ; and to distrust all efforts at reform, as secretly designed to destroy that

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\*Abbott's Teacher.



which they profess to improve. He, therefore, who would be found exerting the greatest amount of influence, and doing the most good, must occupy the middle, but not neutral ground,—avoiding either extreme, but gathering wisdom and power from both. It is not that every thing *new* is not *true*, or that every thing *true* is not *new*; even if it were so, a new dress, or a different aspect, might give to an old truth new beauties, and a greater prominence which it may always have *merited*, but never *received*.

IV. *Teachers are in danger of cultivating the intellectual, at the expense of the moral and the physical natures of their pupils.*

Most communities are acting erroneously upon this subject. They judge of the teacher, and award him the meed of praise, or of censure, in proportion to the amount of intellectual labor which he requires his pupils to accomplish in a given time; irrespective of the cost of obtaining it, either in the sacrifice of the health, or the neglect of the heart. The teacher is in danger of being influenced by this prevailing opinion, as he will seldom possess a sufficiency of moral courage to enable him to rise above it. The best antidote may be found in the reflection, that he is amenable to a higher power than public opinion; and, that however much present gratification the good opinion of others may afford him, a clear conviction of right, and the satisfaction of having conscientiously performed his duty, will in the end afford him far greater and more permanent happiness.

A man's moral and religious nature is the highest part of his nature; and the teacher has no right to neglect its

cultivation. It is his duty to train up the child for usefulness and happiness ; not only for himself, but for others. Intellectual greatness may give him the *ability* to promote the welfare of others ; but this ability will rarely be applied to that purpose, while he is left a slave to his lower propensities. Talent and knowledge, to be a blessing either to the possessor or the world, must be placed under the control of the higher sentiments and principles of our nature ; nay, they may be, and often are a curse to both when not thus controlled and guided. It is not the uncultivated intellect that society has to fear, so much as the corrupt heart. The ignorant may, indeed, be made the tools of others ; but like tools, they are comparatively harmless, without that shrewdness, intelligence, and skill which are necessary to guide them. While on the other hand, those whose moral natures have not been properly cultivated, are ever sowing the seeds of evil, and corrupting all those who come within the sphere of their influence. Better, far better, that a man should remain in ignorance, than that he should eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge, only to be made a more subtle and powerful adversary of God and humanity.

But while the head, and the heart, are receiving a due share of attention, the body, the only organ of manifestation to the world without, should not be entirely overlooked or neglected. The physical natures of those committed to our charge, have a claim upon our care and attention, which cannot be avoided, and should not be disregarded.

Although we cannot, from our relation to the child, have so extensive an influence in forming or developing its physical nature, as the parent ; still there are some

general laws of physiology, to which we may with propriety give heed ; and to the application of which, we are imperatively bound. Because we cannot do *all*, we are not excused for the non-performance of that *little*, for which we have time and opportunity. Among the laws most prominent, over which we have control, is that of the importance, and absolute necessity of a constant and abundant supply of fresh air, in order to promote the healthy activity of the mind, as well as that of the body. This law of our nature is not sufficiently understood or regarded. While we are in health, and are experiencing, as we erroneously suppose, no ill effects from a constant breathing of impure air, we are apt to solace ourselves with the fatal delusion, that there is no danger ; but as we grow older in the wrong doing, as our constitutions become seriously and permanently affected, nay, destroyed as they may be by the process ; then, when too late to repair the evil, we may begin to learn that no law of our nature, however trivial in our estimation, can be violated with impunity ; or, that the result of such violation can in any way be avoided.

A medical writer,\* who has given much attention to the subject, says, that "it is not certain that we remain uninjured, if we breathe over the second time, any portion of air which has the previous instant issued from a pair of lungs, whether ours or those of somebody else." His own opinion, he says, is "that no air, which has issued from the cavity of the lungs, should be inhaled again ; and that by neglect of this rule, though it be in ignorance, thousands and tens of thousands are slowly injuring themselves, and implanting the seeds of disease in

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\*Dr. Alcott.

various forms, especially consumption." "Be it remembered," says another,\* "that mankind subsist more upon air than upon their meat and drink." "The respiration, we might almost say, the *digestion* of pure air, becomes therefore a matter of the highest importance to health. The moment we inhale any atmospheric impurities, that moment does the change of the blood in our lungs become more or less imperfect;" hence, there is another danger incurred, from the congregating together of large numbers in the same apartment, from the quantities of sulphuretted hydrogen gas which is expelled from our bodies; than which a more subtle and poisonous agent can scarcely be found.

The teacher should see that the school-room is at all times thoroughly ventilated; and never rest, or suffer his patrons to do so, until the appropriate means are provided for doing this. Without constant care and attention, the air of the school-room will not be in a proper state for respiration; and its evil tendency will be greatly increased by its elevated temperature. "For want of attention to this subject," says the author† above quoted, "and for want of a due supply of exercise,—joined, it may be, to the habit of going out suddenly into the colder, though purer air, without being sufficiently protected; ten thousands sicken, and thousands die. Our school-rooms, our factories, our shops, and our sleeping apartments,—to say nothing of our parlors, and sitting rooms,—do more to people our grave-yards, every year, than what is usually called intemperance, with all its horrors." This may be thought a startling assertion. Be it so. I am not responsible for it; and Heaven grant that none of us, who

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\*Dr. Thackrah.

†Dr. Alcott.

bear the office of teacher, should be responsible for suffering causes to exist within our control, which lead to results so disastrous.

Something might be said upon the influence of the teacher in preventing the too frequent use, or indeed all use, of unripe or unwholesome fruits; and also of controlling and directing the sports of children in such a manner as may be most conducive to the healthy development of all their faculties. But with this hasty glance I must pass onward, leaving it for *other* and *abler* hands to do justice to a subject, so full of interest, and so much overlooked.

V. *Teachers are in danger of cultivating the memory, at the expense of the understanding.*

This danger is not so imminent, perhaps, as formerly; and yet, I fear, that by some it may not be wholly escaped. New theories and new systems of teaching have labored to simplify and analyze what formerly the pupil received in the mass; hence, his intellectual food is more thoroughly digested. The effort should be, not to see how *much* may be learned but how *well*, and the mere ability to repeat fluently the *words* of a lesson, should be considered a very *small* part of a *good* recitation.

I do not intend to be understood as acceding to the frequently expressed opinion, that no scholar should be required to learn any thing which he does not thoroughly understand. This has been a favorite theory with some, until much of our teaching and many of our text-books, have become fit food for the nursery, rather than the school-room. No food should be prepared for another's reception, which that other is capable of masticating for

himself, inasmuch as the rejection of a little nutrition would be far preferable to an entire paralysis of the digestive organs. Any subject which the pupil thoroughly understands, it may be profitable to require him to express in his own language, for the reason, that he is in this manner taught most successfully the use of language,—his instrument for future use in the expression of his ideas ; and as it is the surest evidence that *he* understands the subject, when he can explain it understandingly to others. In this way, his powers of mind are called into exercise to analyze and construct his sentences. His judgment is exercised to find out the best mode of expression ;—and his vocabulary is enlarged and rendered more available.

He is not to study *what* he understands, but to study that he *may* understand ; and the more effort he makes, the more is his capability of doing so increased. There will always be some things above his comprehension, which he must take upon trust. To this infirmity, if it be one, imperfect humanity will ever be subject. Here the memory must be called into requisition to treasure up, what after life, and more maturity of mind, will develop and bring into use.

VI. *Teachers are in danger of mistaking the END and OBJECT of education, supposing it to consist in a mere attainment of knowledge, or the treasuring up of the opinions, sayings, or doings of others ; irrespective of their use or application.* In doing this, the memory becomes the only faculty called into exercise, while the judgment, the conscience, and the affections, are left to wither and decay. Knowledge thus obtained will be



useful, only in proportion to one's ability properly to apply it ; and this ability can only be obtained by a right cultivation of all the faculties. The same amount of knowledge may in one case be used as a means of usefulness and happiness, while in another it may serve only as an instrument for doing evil. The character of the individual decides the question, whether the knowledge which he may possess, will be a blessing or a curse, either to himself or to the community ; and the formation of this character depends, not so much on the amount of knowledge acquired, as on the influence exerted upon the pupil, by the circumstances, the examples, the discipline under whose operation he is placed. " Education, therefore," in the words of another, " consists in the formation of the character, and a *good* education, in the preparation of man for usefulness and happiness. It involves the right development, cultivation, and direction, of all his powers, physical, intellectual, and moral. It implies instruction in all the branches of knowledge which are necessary to useful and efficient action, in the sphere of the individual. But it must also include the *physical training* which is to render the body capable of executing the purposes of the soul, the *skill* which is requisite, in order to apply our knowledge and strength to the very best advantage, and above all, the *moral training*, by which the character and direction of our efforts are to be decided."\*

Though one cannot be truly educated, and yet be ignorant, still he may have a large amount of *rote-learning*, an extensive collection of crude indigested facts, and be very far from being a really educated man. One is often said to be educated, or to have completed his education,

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\*Annals of Education, page 153.

when he can repeat this man's Grammar, or that one's Geography or History, while his ability to profit by his attainments, is hardly greater than that of the most ignorant. Education, I repeat it, does not consist in committing to memory a certain amount of words or sentences, but in a proper development of all the faculties ; giving to each an appropriate, and to none an undue influence. We have too many men of *one* idea, and few or none of perfectly developed characters ; and who shall say, how much of the radicalism of the day may not be attributable to this imperfect process of education,—developing one faculty at the expense of the others,—educating the head and neglecting the heart.

Parents not unfrequently mistake the end and object of education, and it is for teachers to set them right. They judge of their child's proficiency by the number of pages he has gone over, or rather consumed, and by the number of books they have been called upon to purchase ; and not by the expansion, growth, and successful cultivation of all his powers,—not by the *available* knowledge which he may possess, or by the *power* which he has acquired to obtain more.

“It has been much disputed,” says one,\* “whether it be the primary object of education, to discipline and develop the powers of the soul, or to communicate knowledge. Were these two objects distinct and independent, it is not to be questioned, that the *first* is unspeakably more important than the *second*. But, in truth, they are inseparable. That training which best disciplines and unfolds the faculties, will, at the same time, impart the greatest amount of real and effective knowledge ;

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\*School and Schoolmaster, p. 33.

while, on the other hand, that which imparts thoroughly, and for permanent use, the greatest amount of knowledge, will best develop, strengthen, and refine the powers."

"In proportion as intellectual vigor and activity are more important than mere rote-learning, in the same proportion ought we to attach the more value to an education, which, though it only teaches a child to read, has, in so doing, taught him also to *think*. He who *can think*, and who *loves to think*, will become, with but few good books, a wise man. He who knows not how to think, or who hates the toil of doing so, will remain imbecile, though his mind be crowded with the contents of a library."

This want of long and patient thought, on the part of the pupil, is at the present time, perhaps, the greatest fault in intellectual education ; and it is the most difficult thing to attain. It is so much easier, to hear a child repeat parrot-like, the words of another, than to awaken close and vigorous thought, so much more satisfactory to those who witness and judge of the exercises of a school, to see a promptness and flippancy on the part of the scholars in their recitations, than the slow and apparently hesitating process of the more thoughtful, that teachers are in danger of cultivating the former at the expense of the latter.

The mind of the child should never be made a passive recipient of knowledge ; receiving it merely as a vessel receives water which is poured into it, and retaining it, only as a source of entertainment for superficial listeners at times of public display. Better, far better, that a few questions should be answered requiring thought on the part of the pupil, than a rapid succession of answers,

merely *suffered to escape*, like pent-up steam, by the turning of a valve. The mind should be trained to produce, rather than to receive : and those who labor mainly for the latter, greatly and fatally mistake the *end*, and *object* of education. This looking and laboring for present results, is making the period of education a time of harvesting. Instead of preparing the soil, sowing the seed, and training the young shoots to produce that fruit, which a lifetime only shall be adequate to gather in, we are looking too much for the fruit during the period of sowing,—expecting results, while putting into operation the causes which are to produce them. This may be in unison with man's impatient and hasty impetuosity after the things of this world ; but it is a violation of nature, and of nature's laws. Teachers are too much *inclined* to be satisfied with their labors, if the parents and patrons of their schools are so ; and parents do not always discriminate between the *appearance*, and the *possession* of knowledge. But to *appear* to know is not to *know* ; and teachers should never suffer the shadow to usurp the place of the substance, either in their own minds, or in the estimation of others.

Teachers oftentimes err, by taking for granted what does not in fact exist, in supposing the child knows, when he does not know ; and thus from a misconception of his actual progress, they oftentimes may place an obstruction in his path, which will render his successive steps more difficult of attainment. To avoid this, they should never suffer their pupils to leave one principle for another, until by a succession of questions, explanations, and different statements, they feel assured that the former has obtained a lodgement in the minds of those they are endeavoring

to teach ; never feel satisfied that because *they* understand the subject, and the pupil may *say* he does, that such is the fact ; until the pupil, by his own explanations and statements, shall render it certain ; and therefore safe to pass onward. It has been wisely said, that, " it is the *subject* that is to be taught, rather than the *book*." The book may, indeed, be a convenient instrument to aid one in doing this. By teaching but one thing at a time, and by assisting the pupil to overcome difficulties which may occur in his progress, we may best enable him to obtain that knowledge of any subject which is needful for a proper discharge of the duties of after life, with honor to himself, and with profit to others. We should seldom seek to remove difficulties from the learner's path ; he should be encouraged and assisted to overcome them himself. It is not what we do for him that is most valuable, but what we lead him to do for himself ; as this kind of discipline is all important, to enable him to meet and overcome the trials, disappointments, and stern realities of life, when no helping hand will be near to smooth his rugged path, and shield him from the impending storm.

There is another class of dangers, to which teachers are exposed, more *personal* in their character, as they relate more particularly to themselves ; some of which I proceed briefly to notice.

I. *We are in danger of losing our health, by too close application to our duties.*

The advantages of possessing sound health cannot be over-estimated, in its effect upon ourselves, and upon all those who come within the sphere of our influence.

Without it, we shall rarely possess that cheerfulness of disposition which the teacher should ever strive to possess and retain, who would govern successfully those committed to his charge. A person of a captious, morose, and impatient disposition should never be placed in a situation to influence, and form the mind and character of children. A person of unsound health is in constant danger of giving way to a petulance of habit and manner, destructive to the growth of those finer feelings of our nature which we ever delight to see prominent in others. The teacher, above all others, needs to exercise freely and often while out of school ; and of all others he is, perhaps, the least inclined to do so. Any one who is at all acquainted with the duties of the teacher, experimentally, knows well the degree of lassitude, and disinclination to *any* effort, whether mental or physical, which oppresses him, and prompts him to seek repose whenever he escapes from the pent-up air of the school-room. He would almost as willingly die as move, and he is quite sure to die if he does not move. Almost any other employment gives exercise, air, and sunshine in the performance of its duties ; while in that of teaching, neither exercise, nor air, and but very little sunshine in its purity, is enjoyed. Hence, no employment needs so much out of door exercise, where we can breathe the clear, pure air of heaven.

The teacher should banish, as far as possible, from his mind, during his hours of relaxation, all those subjects of anxiety and perplexity, which harass and torment him, and are a fruitful cause of that melancholy and low spirits, of which teachers are too often, and too justly accused. I know well the difficulty of leaving behind us, as we



leave off a garment, all causes of disquietude, when we leave the school-room door ; but the effort should be to do so. The best and most ready way of doing so, is, to mingle freely in cheerful and pleasant society, or participate in animated discussion ; where the mind will be released from the trials of the day, and become exercised and strengthened, and the body invigorated by the consequent excitement. Nothing, perhaps, is more deleterious in its influence upon a school, than a feeling of despondency, or in other words, low spirits. The teacher needs, in fancy, and in fact, to be ever awake ; his energy, his ardor, and his hope should never flag, that his scholars may be inspired with the same feelings ; and believing that they *can* overcome all obstacles, while they catch the spirit of their teacher, their young aspirations will gain encouragement by *his* example, and strength by their *own exercise*, till at last they *will* overcome obstacles which might have appeared almost insurmountable. In cheerfulness of spirit, in activity, strength, and fixedness of purpose, and in the ardor of their hope, the school will very much resemble their teacher. And these feelings will be active or otherwise, in a degree proportionate to the health of the body.

So intimate is the connexion between the several parts of our compound nature, that the powers of the *mind* cannot be fully, freely, and successfully exercised, without a sound body : hence,

II. *The teacher is in danger of becoming diseased in mind, as well as in body.*

The dull routine of every day duties has a tendency to contract and belittle his mind ; while constant intercourse

with infantile minds has a tendency to check all his upward flights, and hold him down to their own level ; until the mind, like a bow always bent, and never allowed to resume its former position, loses its elasticity, and approximates, to its every day aliment, if it does not become assimilated with it. The mind should come in contact with mature and cultivated mind in others, in order to elicit sparks of genius, and bring out in full and perfect development all its powers. This is in harmony with nature in all her operations. It is not the union of the steel with clay, but with the flint that produces the spark ; nor, is it the *gentle*, though long continued use of the arm, which gives power to the muscles ; but the sturdy blows of the smith who wields the sledge, or remains long at the anvil.

It becomes the imperative duty of the teacher, to avoid, as far as may be, this deterioration of the mind and the body ; lest by successive steps in a downward course, he becomes, at length, incapacitated to retain his present position, and, in process of time, finds himself at the lower extremity of the inclined plane upon which he has involuntarily entered. To do this, he should frequently suffer his mind to unbend from this rigid and unnatural tension, that it may gain its wonted elasticity ; or find opportunity to read attentively and critically the productions of able minds ; which may serve as some antidote for the evil of seclusion from contact with the living mind, as developed in the active business of life.

The teacher should beware how he neglects the cultivation of his own vineyard, while he is caring for that of others. He should never feel satisfied with present attainments, or believe that he is prepared to teach others,

merely by the aid of the printed page, as found in the text-book ; with the questions which he is expected to ask, all prepared, it may be for his use. He should study attentively, not merely the lesson of the day, but the subject on which it treats ; and be enabled so to explain and illustrate it, that he may seldom fail to interest his class ;—always prepared to bring forth something new from his own storehouse. The text-book should be but the introduction to his own resources, which the pupil may use to advantage while alone ; and not merely an instrument of convenience, to minister to the ease of the teacher.

If the teacher is disposed thus to qualify himself to meet his various duties, he will find ample scope for his own intellect, and sufficient employment for his leisure moments ; he will invigorate, strengthen, and promote the healthy activity of his *own* powers, while he will be promoting indefinitely the best good of the pupils of his charge. Let him do this, and his own powers of mind will never be found to deteriorate, but to be constantly progressive, and the consciousness of having been faithful to his trust, and having left no effort untried to increase his usefulness, will exert a salutary influence upon the health of the body.

III. *There is danger of teachers' cherishing a spirit of rivalry, of jealousy, or of exclusiveness, which will prevent that free interchange of opinion, and communication of plans for the improvement of our schools ; so essential to the inexperienced, and so beneficial to all who are engaged in the business of teaching.*

Teachers should ever feel a common interest in all efforts for the advancement of education ;—that any suc-

cessful experiment is not the sole property of the originator, but so much to be added to the general fund in which all teachers are equally interested, and from the profits of which, all are entitled to an equal dividend. Teachers, above all others, need the sympathy and co-operation of each other,—a union of feeling and interest, which shall give them an influence and power to act upon the public mind, which could hardly be resisted, when put forth for good, in the cause of education. There are various ways in which teachers may co-operate with each other, to promote their common interests. Frequent and friendly visits to each other's schools will help to do this. There is no one, however skilled in the art of teaching, who may not derive benefit from witnessing the internal arrangement, and mode of operation in another's school. He may see things to avoid, if not to imitate; and to the less successful, such opportunities cannot but be productive of good. The practised eye of the teacher, in almost any school, may find some things to condemn, which have escaped the observation of the one conducting the exercises, merely because he has viewed them from a different point of observation; or, having failed to correct them at the first, habit has confirmed their practice, until they have ceased to arrest his attention. Visitors, under such circumstances, should consider themselves not as censors appointed to spy out the defects, and magnify the mistakes which they may chance to witness; but as friends and fellow helpers co-operating for the mutual advantage of all,—considering individual, or personal prosperity as nothing, in comparison with the general and universal advancement of the business of instruction.

It will be found beneficial to observe the standard to which scholars are brought, in their several studies, in different schools ; and knowing that " what has *been* done, may *be* done ;" teachers of the less advanced will be stimulated to put forth more vigorous effort, while those of the more advanced, feeling a consciousness of success, ever grateful to the heart of the teacher, will not suffer themselves to lose the pleasure thus derived, by relaxing their efforts, or resting satisfied with present attainments.

Teachers may do much to assist each other, by exerting their influence to correct the false impressions, and erroneous notions, which may prevail in the community, upon the subject of school discipline and instruction ; and in doing this, they may find sufficient employment. The prevailing sentiment of the community affects essentially the well being of the school. How important, then, that this sentiment should be correct, for, the teacher will labor in vain to stem a current, setting constantly against him.

With the *teaching* of the school, parents and friends profess to know but little ; but as it respects the *discipline* of the school, they profess to know everything ; nor will they be slow to obtrude their supposed knowledge upon the notice of the teacher, upon all suitable or unsuitable occasions. Teachers, then, should have a controlling influence in forming and correcting public opinion upon school discipline, as they value its favorable influence, or, as they deprecate its baneful and officious interference.

Frequent meetings of teachers for mutual improvement have been found to be productive of much good, wherever they have been enjoyed and permanently sustained. But let it be remembered, that all who unite in these

meetings, should not consider themselves as hearers merely, but be sure to take a part in the exercises ; either by writing or otherwise ; for the advantages accruing to individuals, will be in direct proportion to the interest which they take, and the amount of effort which they put forth to sustain such meetings. Let no one complain of a want of interest in them, and a lack of usefulness, until he has done all he can to render them more useful ; and let no one complain of inability, until he has made the effort and failed of success. It may be said, that in cities and large towns, this plan may be successfully carried into operation, but in the small towns, the result cannot be so easily obtained. There may be force in this objection, but still it is not conclusive. I know of no place so situated as to render it impracticable to hold meetings of teachers, either in separate towns, or by the union of several towns ; which last course might be advantageously adopted. I can, as I think, perceive much to recommend the union of several towns in such an enterprise. It would convince the people, that we were in earnest in the matter,—that we were willing to sacrifice our own time, convenience, and ease, it may be, for their good ; and it is here, as every where else, that when one is found to be in earnest, he then, if not before, begins to be listened to favorably, and to exert an influence upon others.

These meetings, at stated times, might be open for the attendance of parents and others, partaking something of the character of district meetings ; where a very good opportunity would be presented for teachers from a neighboring town, to speak with a directness of application, of the particular wants of such district, and say



things which would come best from the lips of a stranger. They might speak of the *duties* of parents,—of their neglect of their schools, or of their unnecessary and misjudged interference ; and thus, while speaking in general terms, but with particular application, they would be assisting each other to correct evils, which individual teachers might labor in vain to effect.

The importance of a union of feeling and effort, cherished and strengthened by a frequent meeting together of teachers, and a frequent visiting of each other's schools, for the purpose of seeing their various plans in actual operation, cannot be over estimated. One may read, as he certainly should, much upon the subject of education ; he may be educated in the Normal school, but after all, he must take life with life's conditions, as it presents itself in its varied aspects, and under widely differing circumstances.

IV. *There is danger of teachers failing to estimate, as they should, the responsibility of their office.*

Too many teachers are the mere creatures of circumstance. They are placed in their position by some accidental occurrence, and retain it, only for its emolument, or as an intermediate step to some more desirable situation. They have no heart in the business ; hence, they seldom sit down and count the cost of the influence which they are exerting, for good or for evil, upon the future characters and lives of their pupils. When they reflect, that every blow they strike, may not cease to act upon the future destiny of their charge, " while time shall last or immortality endure ;" they can hardly be expected to estimate accurately the responsibility of their situation ;

though they may strive earnestly to do so. I would not undervalue the many sources of influence, brought to bear upon the child, in the formation of its character. They all have their appropriate sphere of action, and it is only by continuing in that sphere which properly belongs to them, that their influence is made to be either extensive or useful. The teacher has his sphere of operation, and it is none the less important, because there may be others laboring to the same end. It is not too much to say, that the success of all our institutions, civil, literary, and religious, depend mainly upon the labors of the teacher. In vain will the statesman descant upon the best models, and the best modes of administering government, if the people are incapable of judging, or of appreciating their worth. In vain, that the eloquence of the bar should be called into requisition, to sustain those laws which our fathers, in their wisdom, have seen fit to enact and transmit to us ; while ignorance, the hot-bed, if not the generator of crime, is the predominant characteristic of the people. In vain, that he, who ministers at the altar, should strive to unfold to the mind the sacred and sublime truths of revelation, and enforce its duties upon the uneducated and the superstitious. The teacher must prepare the ground, by so unfolding and training the mental and moral powers of the child, that he may be prepared readily to receive, and properly to cherish the seed that may be sown. What we are as a nation, and what we enjoy as a people, may be mainly attributable to the high regard paid by our ancestors to the cause of popular education ; and their corresponding efforts to transmit, unimpaired, the same sentiments to us.

Education is the surest preventive of crime. The

statistics of all Christian, as well as Pagan countries, go to prove this assertion. Spain, in which it has been said that, until recently there was but one newspaper ; and in which not more than one in twenty of the people are instructed in schools, has a population about equal to that of England and Wales ; while the number of convictions for murder, or for maiming with intent to kill, was in one year, in the former country, *two thousand and six* ; and in the latter, in the same length of time, it was only *twenty-seven* ! We cannot be surprised that in such a land, the foulest crimes should seek no concealment, and pass unpunished or undeplored ;—that scenes of bloodshed should constitute the favorite amusement of the people ;—and, that their only security, of person or of property, should consist in their successful intrigue, or their power of resistance. How different the spirit and the character developed by a proper system of education. Those, whose minds and whose hearts have been properly trained and disciplined by education, have control over their passions. Having cultivated a taste for simple and innocent pleasures, rather than a love for vicious excitement, their desires are awakened by objects higher than any gratification merely animal. Instead of being mere creatures of impulse, they become reasoning and reflective beings, governed by a sense of justice, and of right, which leads them to respect and concede the rights of others. Forming plans for a distant future, they thus rise nearer and nearer to a spiritual existence ; while all the sentiments and principles bestowed by the Creator, are made to occupy their proper places, and move together in subordination, to the great ends of their being.

If contemplations like these, upon the importance of

the subject, do not inspire the teacher with exalted views of the dignity and responsibility of his calling, let him reflect upon the nature and value of the material, on which he is called to operate. This is nothing less than a living, thinking, accountable, immortal mind,—a *soul* made in the very image of its Creator ; the crown and glory of his creation. The amount of care and pains due to a given work, is in proportion to the value of the material on which the labor operates, and the importance of the object contemplated. The most transparent and purest marble, even gold and diamonds, on which is expended such exquisite art, are valueless, compared with the human mind. Let us contemplate its godlike nature ; its stupendous powers of thought, enjoyment, and suffering ; its high responsibilities, and immortal existence. Let us reflect, that long after all material monuments of skill and of glory shall have crumbled and perished, the mind will endure ; and that though we may seem, for a time, to labor upon it with little success, and *less* reward, still we are doing a work that will last forever, and which, if well done, will be sure to be fully rewarded and appreciated at a future period.

The teacher operates upon the mind in an important period of its existence. It is in its formative state, and it might be well to consider the child, not as he *is*, but as he is soon *to be*. From among the mass of pupils, on whom we may now look as almost worthless, so feeble their intellects, so limited their knowledge, so difficult, it may be, that we find it practicable to fix in their minds the simplest and plainest principles ; we are to find our future rulers, statesmen, and divines ; those with whom will rest our future destinies as a people, with all our in-

terests. They are the fathers and mothers, on whom will depend the peace and happiness of all the families, and the training up of all the sons, and all the daughters of the land. Surely, to be instrumental of putting into operation the causes which lead to results so stupendous, is an honor to which kings might aspire, and shows the alling of the teacher, to be second in dignity and importance to none other.

But soon our duties and our opportunities will cease. What we do, must be done quickly. And, if we would have our names embalmed in the grateful remembrance of those who shall come after us, let no sacrifice be withheld, no self-denial spared, and no labor refused, that we may give a right direction to that mass of mind with which we come in contact from day to day. "No man liveth for himself." We live for the world ; we live for posterity ; we live for eternity ! And taking the *Bible* for our guide, the example of *Him*, who went about doing good, for our pattern, and the glory of *Jehovah* for our end, we shall not live in vain, nor die ingloriously, though the world applaud us not, and its honors and emoluments be not our portion.





LECTURE V.

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ON THE INTRODUCTION

OF

NATURAL HISTORY

AS A

REGULAR CLASSIC IN OUR SEMINARIES.

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BY CHARLES BROOKS,  
Boston.

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THE subject assigned me is NATURAL HISTORY, a subject no narrower than the vast creation ; a history of nature. The study of this science then how comprehensive ! *comprehensive*, because it embraces a knowledge of all the bodies and beings spread over the surface of the earth ; of all the substances under that surface which constitute its mass ; of all the phenomena of which these bodies are the seat, the various characters which distinguish them from each other, and the part they all act in the great economy of the universe.

The study of this science, moreover, how simple ! *simple*, because it has to do with what our eyes can see, and our hands can handle and our minds can know. Leaving the fields of conjectural criticism and vague

hypothesis, it goes to plant itself on the sterling facts of nature and of life.

From this wide field of truth and inquiry I select one topic ; viz. The introduction of Natural History as a regular classic into our Colleges, Academies, Normal and High Schools.

The questions, therefore, which seem to embrace my subject are these :

1st. Is Natural History a science which youth from 12 to 18 years of age can understand ?

2. If they can understand it, is it a study which will help to develop the powers of their minds, and to elevate the affections of their hearts ?

3. If it can do both these, how can it be introduced, as a regular classic, into our seminaries ?

I. We begin then with asking, *Is Natural History a science which youth from 12 to 18 years of age can understand ?*

I answer :—In all the best private schools, and in the colleges on the continent of Europe, pupils of both sexes study this science as a specific part of regular instruction ; and I never heard it said that they could not understand it ; but on the contrary, I have repeatedly heard it said, that it was esteemed the most attractive of all studies. In the normal schools and universities it is a fixed classic as much as greek or mathematics. If European pupils can understand it, cannot American ?

But as this answer to our question may not be wholly satisfactory to some, let me answer it in the fullest manner by examining the topics most fit to be introduced

into our seminaries ; and this examination will convince us that our youth can understand them.

We might here examine Botany, Geology, Chemistry or Zoology, and a specimen-lesson might be selected from either of these sciences to illustrate the simplicity which could be introduced into an elementary work which successfully popularized Natural History as a study for youth. Such a specimen-lesson I will here attempt as an example. I care not from which department it be taken ; but, I have selected the *Skeleton of Birds*, because it is so little known, and because the statements concerning it can be so easily verified. Let us look, then, with the eye of a learner, at the skeleton of birds ; and the following questions and answers may introduce us into the school-room.

Question—What circumstances claim particular notice in the skeletons of birds ?

Answer—The materials of which they are composed, then their peculiar forms, and then their natural arrangement.

Q. What can you say about these ?

A. The materials of which the skeleton of birds is composed are bones, horn and gristle ; and their peculiar forms and arrangement may be seen in the turkey and goose which we have on our tables ; though every different order of birds has a shape exactly fitted to its own particular mode of getting its living and rearing its young.

Q. In making the skeleton of birds, what objects were chiefly to be regarded ?

A. There were two objects to be secured, viz. strength and lightness.

Q. Well, how were these secured ?

A. They were secured in the first place by adopting quills, which combine strength and lightness more than any other substance in nature ; and 2dly, by making the bones hollow, so that the bird can fill them with air, which air being warmer than the outward air, makes the bird a sort of balloon in the sky.

Q. Can you state another curious fact on this subject ?

A. I can, and the fact is this : that those limbs in birds which are the most used in locomotion, have bones the *most* hollow : for example, the wings of the ostrich are not hollow, because they are never used in flight, while the bones of its legs are remarkably hollow because they *are* used in locomotion. So the leg-bones of great fliers are not particularly hollow, because these birds do not depend on running, while their wing-bones are remarkably hollow because they are used for motion.

Q. Can you mention any other remarkable fact, relating to the skeleton of birds ?

A. There is one relating to the back-bone or vertebræ. The back-bone in the mammalia is flexible, and unless it was so, they could not move as they do ; but in birds the several small bones which compose the back-bone, just opposite the wings, are all soldered together so that they cannot bend ; and the reason for this is, that the wings in flying need a stiff, immoveable fulcrum or support to sustain them in their violent motions of striking the air. This contrivance of making the vertebræ solid nearly doubles the power of the wings.

Q. But do all birds have stiff vertebræ opposite their wings ?

A. No ; because all do not need a fulcrum. For example, the ostrich, casowary, &c. which do not fly,

have moveable back-bones like the mammalia. If their vertebræ were fastened and stationary, they would experience extreme inconvenience.

Q. Are there any interesting facts pertaining to the sternum or breast-bone in birds ?

A. Yes, many ; and one of them is this, that while in man and the other mammalia the breast-bone is fastened to the ribs by cartilage or gristle, thus enabling the chest to expand and contract in breathing, this is not so in birds ; because, this motion of the bones would make the fulcrum of the wings unsteady and flexible, and thus fatally weaken it as a point of support. Nature knowing this, has put bone in birds where gristle exists in all other animals, and thus has completely obviated every difficulty.

Q. You say, that the *fastening* of the breast-bone to the ribs differs from that in the mammalia ; I would ask, if the breast-bone itself also differs from the same bone in other animals ?

A. Certainly it does. Look at the sternum of a man, it is very small ; while that of a duck is immense. The breast-bone in birds is a broad shield, or concave buckler, spread over the whole breast.

Q. But why are they so much more expanded in birds than in other animals ?

A. Because the great muscles which move the wings, must be fastened in the strongest manner possible ; and this broad surface of bone, with its ridge in the centre, affords room for thus tying down the muscles of flight.

Q. Has the sternum the same proportionate size in all birds ?

A. It has not. The ostrich, for example, has a ster-

num smaller than that of the swan or the eagle ; and the naturalist is taught to decide by the shape and size of the breast-bone, whether the bird be a slow or a vigorous flier. The sternum of the ostrich is too small and weak to give any strength to his wings, while that of the eagle is broad and strong, indicating that he has an immense power of wing.

Q. What do these and other facts concerning the skeleton of birds teach the reflecting mind ?

A. They show that exact adaptation of means to ends which pervades creation. HE who contrived the skeleton of birds made it to correspond minutely with the density of the atmosphere and the power of gravitation.

This specimen is sufficient ; though the lesson might be continued on the skeleton to a great length, showing at every step new marks of wise design, and the whole might be as readily comprehended.

Take the bill or beak of birds ; and whether we examine those which are made to tear flesh, or those intended to crack nuts, or bore holes in wood, or penetrate the earth, or catch fish, or open oysters, or strain water, in each and every group we shall see surprising differences, yet in each an exact adaptation of means to ends. So likewise of their feet ; if to grapple live prey, or serve as stilts, or to defend the brood, or scratch the ground, or row in the water, each species will abundantly vindicate the perfection of its form, and show, to a demonstration, that every bone, quill, beak, and talon are in harmony with the universal order of creation.

I repeat, that this is not a tythe of what may be said on the skeleton of birds ; but this may be enough, before this audience, to show as an example, that a youth twelve



years old, could perfectly understand it all. Every other point is susceptible of being made equally plain and quite as interesting ; and I will venture to add, that I think the whole science of Natural History can be thus simplified, and made as much more clear and intelligible than rhetoric and grammar, as mathematics is more demonstrable than poetry.

Had we more time for adding proofs, we should find them at hand and most abundant ; but, I must dismiss this part of the subject with this recapitulation—1st, that the science of Natural History is a regular and cherished classic in European schools ; and 2dly, that its leading principles and facts may be so simplified and stated, as to be level to the youthful comprehension.

II. Our second inquiry, therefore, is this :—*Is Natural History a science which will help to develop the intellectual powers and to elevate the moral affections ?*

We answer ; it is admirably calculated to develop the *intellectual* powers. Nature was the first volume which Heaven published for the education of man ; and Adam was its first student. He had no other book. Creation was the page spread out before *him*, and God was his teacher ; and the first thing he did, was to give distinguishing names to all the animals of the earth and sky. From his day to ours, the pure-hearted and reflecting have loved to hold communion with nature in all her beautiful forms ; and he whose thoughts are fixed on Botany, Chemistry, Mineralogy, Geology, Zoology, will promptly confess that they are studies which require minute observation, delicate analyses, serial proofs and philosophical classification ; thus giving the freest, healthiest

exercise to the intellectual powers. Matter in its various forms and combinations, and life in its various modes and forces, constitute the basis of all physical science, while they afford the truest illustrations of the philosophy of mind. Natural History is thus the great source of human knowledge, the great object of mental activity. If mathematics claim to have positive strength in developing intellect, then surely Natural History is equally potent; for, the severity of mathematics marks half the processes of thought. It is eminently an exact science, resting on demonstrations. The great Cuvier, that second legislator in Natural Science, says: "The habit necessarily acquired in the study of Natural History, of mentally classifying a great number of ideas, is one of the advantages of this science which is seldom spoken of, and which, when it shall have been generally introduced into the system of common education, will perhaps become the principal one. It exercises the student in that part of logic which is termed *method*, as the study of geometry does in that which is called *sylllogism*; because Natural History is the science which requires the most precise methods, as geometry is that which demands the most rigorous reasoning. Now this art of method, when once well acquired, may be applied with infinite advantage to studies the most foreign to Natural History. Every discussion which supposes a classification of facts, every research which requires a distribution of matters, is performed after the same manner, and he who had cultivated this science merely for amusement, is surprised at the facilities it affords for disentangling all kinds of affairs." This testimony in favor of introducing Natural History, as a regular study, into our common schools, is from a

man who surpassed all others in his attainments in the science, and whose recommendation, therefore, has almost the force of a divine command.

Take Chemistry, and see it penetrating to the primitive atoms of all substances, then unfolding their combinations, revealing their powers, and, after all, combining them anew for the progress of all useful arts. How do we admire, when we see it harnessing galvanism, electricity, and light to its car, and making them fill the earth with comforts and health. The results of chemical analysis are becoming every month more important to society, and every new one is a new reason why the course of instruction in our highest schools should embrace them. This science opens a field of inquiry to the young mind at once engaging and profitable; I have known boys, twelve years old, who have repeated and understood the experiments of learned professors. It only needs in this, as in many other departments, that we should have sufficient faith in the capacity of young minds.

With equal justice similar remarks may be made concerning Geology and Mineralogy. They are sciences which can be made level to the youthful comprehension; and when so made, they will become sources of healthful excitement and industrious observation.

With regard to Botany, there can be no doubt that it will soon become a regular classic in every elevated school. Its adaptation to the tastes and habits of children, its connexion with their pleasures, their food, and even their medicine, would be enough to ensure their love for it, without connecting it with the first form of organic life, to which so large a part of the animal crea-

tion looks, and to which all animal life primarily has relationship.

With regard to Zoology, this is a science which may be first introduced, because most easily apprehended, and yielding the earliest reward. The animals which arrest our attention on every side, are too familiar to need description, and a youth would be already in possession of the requisite introductory knowledge in their study. It would often be but extending his view, teaching him the philosophy of what (as in the skeleton of birds) his eyes had constantly beheld. The means of study would be so within reach, that this part of Natural History could be pursued, at any time, to almost any extent.

Among the advantages which this study imparts to the intellectual powers, are those of tracing relationships, and of comprehending its rigid rules of classification. Each part is connected as directly as antecedent and consequent. It is said, in commendation of mathematics, that each preceding principle well understood, becomes a luminous introduction to the next succeeding. This is also true to its fullest extent in Zoology. Each law of life with which the pupil becomes acquainted, serves as a revealer to the next in order ; and when once the series is well entered upon, the student will find too great enthusiasm growing within him, unless he has the privilege of entire devotion to the science. For example, when the student is able to distinguish the peculiarities in the teeth of different orders of animals, how soon will he be able to decide on the form, food, and habits of these animals. As soon as he knows accurately the bill and feet in birds, or the mouth and fins in fishes, how readily will he classify those who fall under his notice. And now

think what an infinity of relationships are connected with each of these inquiries ! Questions touching earth, air and water, immediately arise for adjustment ; and before the student is aware, he finds himself environed by truths, new and luminous, all rising out of his first lessons in animal life. Take the most unfavorable case, a young man in a country village. That young man, if he had been taught the elements of Zoology at school, would feel an interest to collect all the different kinds of animals, birds, reptiles, insects, &c., which came within his reach ; and fixing his attention on their shape, size, color, motions, and habits, would soon gather a little museum of specimens. His taste for these pursuits would not die out in his soul, because there would be continually presented to him new illustrations of what he had learned. With nature for a book, and nature's God for a teacher, he could not walk far without seeing some new passage to peruse. Thus his mind would always be awake to his researches ; and, selecting one department perhaps, as more agreeable to his taste than the others, he would miss no occasion of enlarging his experience. Thus, on his favorite topic, he would centre his thoughts and feelings, and that part of Zoology would therefore become his every-day theme of conversation among his friends and fellow-laborers. How would he thus fill, with delightful and improving pursuits, many of the hours which others waste in vacuity ; and thus educate his mind to reflection, and his heart to piety. What process more simple than this ; what more rational ; what more attainable ; what more elevating ? At how little cost does this fill life with interest ! The habit of methodical thinking would be gradually strengthened in that young man's

mind, till it came to preside over all his studies. The thoughts must conform to that beautiful series of classes, orders, families, tribes, and species, into which created beings classify and arrange themselves. Without the inductive methods nothing can be done ; but, *with* them we can make the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms, speak out the laws which govern the stars.

The study of Zoology demands and begets habits of observation. There is no study which opens the eyes like Natural History. There are times when the naturalist would be glad to be "lined with eyes." Wakefulness and curiosity are up in all their strength, and the feelers of the soul are all spread out. Knowledge rushes in at every pore ! What study can be more favorable to *mental* progress !

And is it not equally favorable to *moral* ? This question we promised to answer. Let us then look at creation from the angle at which the Deity looks at it.

The universe is the visible translation of the Creator's thought, the embodiment of that great idea which was patterned forth in his own mind before he said, "Let there be light." After that glorious prototype, the things about us were made, each sustaining *now*, as *then*, its unbroken relationship to its mighty Maker. The careful study of the works of God must lead the human mind to adoration, trust and love. It is the study of Natural History which most directly promotes this highest dignity of the mind, because it is tracing the Deity in his works ; and surely the student, as he comes into possession of the *divine* thoughts, must feel his own enlarged and elevated. He thereby comes into the sanctuary of his own being ; nay more, he comes into the society of a higher



intelligence than his own, and therefore feels the dignity of one who is admitted to the holy of holies. What loftier science can there be, than that where the Creator's ideas are the connecting links in the chain of human reasoning, and his works are the inspiration of the instructed heart !

Now, the difference between being an intelligent reader of the works of God, and no reader at all, is immense. Suppose you are placed in the midst of a splendid gallery of first-rate paintings, exhibiting the poetic conceptions of the most inventive artists. You know little or nothing of paintings; and therefore the views, figures, and histories before you are so many bewildering hieroglyphics to your eye. You know not where to begin, or how to read. Suppose a judge and connoisseur should enter the gallery, and, standing with you before a group, should repeat to you, in words, the story which the painter has told in the canvass. As soon as you have caught the idea and got the key, then you understand every stroke of the pencil, and now how entirely different to you is that painting ! The hieroglyphics immediately become the most simple and expressive words. You look at the facts from the same point as did the artist ; you enter into his thought, you glow with his warmth and kindle with his spirituality ; and the difference between your present state of knowledge and enjoyment and your former state of ignorance, is about the difference between a seeing man and a blind one ; and this, I take it, is exactly the difference between the naturalist and the uninstructed man, in their observation and understanding of nature.

To make it yet clearer ; suppose you stood before the portrait of Newton, not knowing it was his. You look at

it and speak of it without any great interest, regarding it only as a man's head on a painted canvass. But, suppose a friend should come and tell you that it was the original portrait of the great mathematician, would the state of your thoughts remain the same as before ? O, no. That face now becomes all radiant with hallowed associations ; the very tints before you seem to glow with that mighty genius which decomposed the solar ray, and demonstrated, with all the majesty of truth, the compound nature of light. The moment the name of Newton reaches your ear, you connect with his form before you, the great law of gravitation, which stretches its arms to the outer boundaries of creation, holding in its steady grasp the universe of God. O ! how many noble thoughts rush to the soul ! How different the state of your mind and feelings now, from what they were in your ignorance ! Be assured, that nature, to its true and loving student, awakens sentiments and emotions as vivid and as lasting ; while to the uninstructed and heedless, she is a dead and unintelligible picture.

Suffer another illustration. He who looks on the letters of a printed page, sees dark lines on a white ground ; but, he who in addition can read and can comprehend, *he* looks beyond the outward forms to the inner intelligence, and gathers up the inspiration that lies hidden under these dead signs ; so he, who looks, with uninstructed eye, upon the vast creation, sees sky, earth, animals, and motion, and there he stops ; while the naturalist, regarding also these outward forms, passes through them to analyze the whole, and thus penetrates till he comes to the divine idea or central model, after which the whole universe is formed, with its perfect unity of

design, and its infinite variety of parts. The naturalist reads, on the page of nature, the grand majestic text of divine wisdom and love, written in characters into which time cannot eat, and preserved from age to age, from all corrupt interpolations. Yes, he traces there the sublime unity, the universal type, the frontal idea existing in the divine mind connecting the mammoth and the snail. In one word, he "looks through nature up to nature's God."

By these illustrations and remarks, I would enforce the simple fact, that the study of Natural History opens to us ten thousand sources of knowledge and happiness, which are forever closed to the rest of mankind. Now the question is ; whether our children, who are to live in this world, shall always walk blindfold through it, shut out from the glory, beauty, and inspiration of nature ? Has God given us eyes to see, and ears to hear, and hearts to feel, and then placed us in the midst of this earthly paradise where every sense can be regaled, only that we should shut our eyes, and stop our ears, and petrify our hearts ? Poor Julia Brace and Laura Bridgeman, who have been deaf, dumb, and blind from birth, have an apology for ignorance of the works of God ; but, for us, whose heads are all planted over with the hungry inlets of knowledge, there is no excuse for dooming ourselves to their condition.

"Oh ! how canst thou renounce the boundless store  
Of charms, which Nature to her votary yields !  
The warbling woodland, the resounding shore,  
The pomp of groves, the garniture of fields,  
And all that echoes to the song of even ;  
All that the sheltering mountain's bosom shields,  
And all the dread magnificence of heaven :  
Oh ! how canst thou renounce, and hope to be forgiven ?"

It cannot be doubted, that the proper study of nature begets devout affections ; and this truth has given rise to the common maxim, " that a true naturalist cannot be a bad man." God's works do indeed appeal strongly to our higher natures ; and may we not lay it down as an axiom, that from nature's page are to be read the first lessons of beauty and sublimity ? When our first parents opened their eyes upon Paradise they saw beauty ; and when they walked its fields in innocence, they felt sublimity. The young, and pure, and trusting spirit, is ever thus in harmony with the universe, and the study of Natural History will keep it in the blest communion. The fresh and docile heart takes to nature as instinctively as the grazing animal takes to the field, or the web-footed fowl to the sea. These tendencies have been forcibly arrested in our children by the same unnatural process, by which some grazing animals are never allowed to see a pasture, and some web-footed fowls are cooped up for life in a dry pen. Children have been so forcibly crowded into the narrow and artificial paths made by men, that the wide and cheerful paths of nature have been untrodden. Only give Natural History its fair chance among the studies of youth, and I am confident it will become one of the most grateful and efficient of the formative powers in education. The boy who desires to have his miniature garden, his faithful dog, and his hive of bees ; and his sister who must have the plat of flowers, her dear canary, and her golden fish, do both show the common taste of the human heart to hold communion with nature. Human taste is a creation of God, and that taste finds its object in the kindred works of God. That mind, therefore, which is in harmony with nature, dwells in the divine idea.

I close this part of my subject with an inference. In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. He looked upon the works of his hands and pronounced them good. By the study of these works, we come to look at creation from the same angle at which the Deity looked at it, and we then *understandingly* join him in his decision and approval ; and I infer, that, from the very nature of the human mind and the constitution of the human heart, there cannot come to the mind these thoughts, nor to the heart these emotions, without expanding the one and elevating the other.

III. If, then, it be true that the study of Natural History will help to develope the reasoning powers, and to elevate the pious affections, the only remaining question is ; *How can this study be introduced into our seminaries of learning ?*

I answer, by making their Presidents, Guardians, and Teachers feel the force of the truth now stated. As soon as they are persuaded of them, they cannot hesitate. They cannot hesitate to become fellow workers with that great TEACHER, whose lessons are written all over the world in letters of light, and whose blessing descends upon youth, as his dew distils on the opening flower. Many governors of literary, scientific, and educational establishments have said to me : "We should like to make Natural History a regular study in our seminaries, but we have no proper books." There are many valuable manuals in Botany, Chemistry, Mineralogy, and Geology. In Zoology, there are translations from some foreign works, but not works of the latest date. If other manuals are needed, many scholars, I trust, will appear ready and wil-

ling to furnish such aids. All will be welcome in this wide field of labor, and the more that enter it, the better. I have taken my humble place in it, and am preparing a series of class-books on Zoology, which I hope may soon appear to do their modest part in the great enterprise. I know of no better way for naturalists to bring this subject palpably before the proper authorities. I am sure all such efforts will be viewed with candor; and that there are many who will overlook small defects in execution, while they patronize the great object which such contributions are designed to assist. To this Institute, the friends of natural science may always look with confidence, assured of its aid in every plan which promises an upward step in the means of elementary instruction.

Having thus answered too briefly the three questions proposed, let me add a few remarks somewhat inferential.

1. This study of Natural History is happily free from all sects in religion and parties in politics, thus giving the freest exercise to all our powers without the interference of any narrowing prejudice or conventional aim.

2. It is a study particularly fitted to our country, where the means of verifying all the leading principles are within the reach of every village. If this science should become a fixed classic in our Normal schools and Academies, as it certainly will in our Colleges, it will be advisable to make collections in Natural History, and have them deposited where all the pupils can have the freest access to them. I have known some of our common high schools which have collected many interesting specimens; and since every region has some peculiarities in its mineral, vegetable, and animal domains, it would become a most easy, improving, and useful exercise for



students to gather and arrange what they find about them. After a few years the system of exchanges would get into operation, and then the science would become a new bond of fellowship between separated but congenial minds. If a microscope could be added to such a collection, so much the better ; and if an itinerant lecturer, or school missionary, could take this science among his other subjects for awakening young minds to reflection and young hearts to piety, so much the better still.

3. Among the incidental advantages of this study, I think I may reckon this, that it will put an end, definitely and forever, to that whole system of murder and cruelty, which is visited on the harmless races of animals, be they quadrupeds, birds, or insects.

4. May we not count the promotion of health as another of its benefactions ? It brings its votary into the open air, and prompts to those muscular exercises, out of which issue growth and strength.

5. It is profitable to the purse too ; for it belongs to that science, which has taught how to make two blades of grass grow, where only one grew before. It instructs how to improve the races of animals, so as to give us better clothing and sweeter food ; while it reveals how to arrest, most effectually, the ravages of those insects which destroy our crops, and of those worms which scuttle our ships. In short, its Botany and Chemistry have untold wealth yet in store for some future Linnæus or Davy, as its Geology and Zoology have for some future Cuvier.

6. There is another incidental advantage. Some minds have a bias towards valuing chiefly all deviations from nature, considering those productions alone as curi-

ous and interesting, which break through her laws, and mar her beauty. Now the study of Natural History takes off the eye from these aberrations from the prevalent wisdom and harmony of nature's works, in order to fix them upon the oft-repeated and all-surrounding proofs of completeness and perfection.

✓ And will you grant, that there is another advantage in its protective power in the mind? Now-a-days we are surrounded with miraculous claims to supernatural nonsense; and I know of no study so curative of these thick-crowding absurdities, as that of *nature*; and the more natural science is studied, the less will impostors prevail. Ghosts are terribly afraid of day-light. Natural science steadies the mind. Its truths, once acquired, are not like those vaporous theories that watch their occasions to vanish from the thoughts; but they are substantial facts, and, like our household friends, are ever presenting their faces for grateful recognition. It is not among the least attractions of this study that its truths are rememberable.

8. Does not our favorite study accord with our social nature? Most certainly. In this business of science, everything is diffusive. We are all debtors to the purest minds that have preceded us; but their legacies have descended to the world generally, and not to heirs and assigns that can be named only in the will of the testator. Natural science brings all classes and conditions together. There is no monopoly; there is no solitude, because the natural philosopher is addressed continually by as many living voices; voices not of reproach, not of scorn, not of defiance; but, voices of endearment, of invitation, and of trust. Thus it is a social study. It brings all together on the footing of equality. Man's heart answers

to nature, and nature answers to man's heart. They are both made by the same Being, and made for each other. The mind thus instinctively forms a friendship with the nature which is crowding about our path, and which is asking for communion and copartnership. Is there not a sympathy between the wide and winning lessons of nature, and the open, asking spirit of childhood? Lord Bacon says: "He that could enter the kingdom of nature, must enter it as the Christian does the kingdom of heaven; in the capacity of a little child." No sentiment can be truer than this. Docility, thirst for exact knowledge, and love of truth, these are the beautiful attributes of childhood, and they accord harmoniously with the teachings of nature.

9. Let me then recommend the introduction of Natural History as a classic into our High Schools and Academies, instead of the history of national wars, the debates of angry politicians, the sublimities of rhetoric, and the mazes of grammar. I am sure it will be found that this study is head-work and heart-work. It brings the reasoning powers into immediate contact with all the laws of matter and of life, while at the same time it brings the moral affections into communion with their universal harmonies. It leads us to see the works of God as they are, and then, by irresistible consequence, to feel that they are "very good." It spreads out before us the proofs of a Creator, and then the reasons for our trust in his wisdom, power, and love. How many, therefore, are the pleasures of the naturalist! They are the satisfactions which flow from looking at nature from the divine point of observation, of seeing the relations we ourselves bear to the universe, of tracing the general adaptation,

the all-pervading harmony, and the sublime intent of the whole ; and added to these, the joys of systematic and satisfactory thinking ; of well-sinewed limbs and a heart tuned to joy. Allow me to say, that when this study shall take the rank it deserves among our means of education, the rank it now holds in the best seminaries of Europe, that it will be found effective, above most others, in developing the intellectual and moral powers of youth.

10. Of examples there are thousands. I will content myself with one, and that is a host. Audubon says of himself thus :—" When I had hardly yet learned to walk and to articulate those first words, always so endearing to parents, the productions of nature that lay spread all around, were constantly pointed out to me. They soon became my playmates ; and before my ideas were sufficiently formed to enable me to estimate the difference between the azure tints of the sky and the emerald hue of the bright foliage, I felt that an intimacy with them, not consisting of friendship merely, but bordering on phrensy, must accompany my steps through life : and now, more than ever, am I persuaded of the power of those early impressions. My father generally accompanied my steps, procured birds and flowers for me, with great eagerness pointed out the elegant movements of the former, and the splendid attire of the latter. My valued preceptor would then speak of the departure and return of birds with the seasons, and would describe their haunts, and, more wonderful than all, their change of livery ; thus exciting me to study them and to raise my mind towards their great Creator."

## LECTURE VI.

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ON

## CLASSICAL INSTRUCTION.

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BY A. H. WELD, A. M.,

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THE subject assigned to me for the present occasion, is Classical Instruction. It was desired by the Committee of Arrangements, that my remarks should be confined to the method of teaching the ancient classics.

My sole object, therefore, is to exhibit the method of instruction in the Latin and Greek languages, which appears to me best adapted to the ends had in view in studying them. The advantages aimed at in the study of these languages are generally admitted to be, first, the attainment of such a knowledge of their principles and structure as will be *practically* useful, in opening the treasures of ancient learning ; and second, by the severe and patient effort necessary in acquiring this knowledge, to train the mind to a free and manly exercise of its faculties.

The first advantage named is seldom realized to any considerable extent in this country. Very few, it is presumed, read the classics with a facility which renders them of much practical value. Owing to the shortness of time devoted to them, and the careless method of pursuing them, even the rudiments are but imperfectly acquired, and much time and labor are wasted. On the score of discipline, great advantage is derived from the study of the classics, even when the method of teaching is defective, but here too an irreparable loss is sustained. Intellectual labor is *never* without recompense. But it is productive of more and better fruit, when judiciously applied.

Considering the great number of the young engaged in studying the classics, and the time consumed in this department of learning, and the destiny of those who pass through this protracted course of discipline, scarcely a topic can be suggested of greater practical importance in its bearing upon the subject of education generally, than the one which at present engages our attention; for we are apt to teach as we are taught, and to transmit the methods of our own training, with almost instinctive fidelity.

Before entering upon the discussion of the subject, what is the best method of Classical Instruction,—it should be premised, that no good mode of teaching the classics can supersede the necessity of vigorous and persevering exertion on the part of the learner.

Efforts have been made in this, as in other departments of education, to save labor, or in other words to make the teacher or the book do the work which appropriately belongs to the student. While the learner at



first should not be encompassed with insurmountable difficulties, he should still meet with enough to put his ingenuity and patience to the test. In every new conquest, he gains fresh courage, and when he is not overtaxed, his pleasure will be in proportion to the difficulties to be overcome.

There is a certain class of pretended friends of sound classical learning, who seem to regard it as the only object of teaching and bookmaking, to simplify what is simple, and scatter light in the pupil's path by learnedly expounding what is perfectly obvious. With amazing fruitfulness they spawn their works upon the public, and unblushingly declare, that their own good commentaries are so complete and true to the original, that printed translations are becoming obsolete. Our New England youth need no such helps. They are made of "sterner stuff." Rather than *these*, give them the naked Text Book, without note or comment. Knowledge untoiled for, is unappreciated. Far better employed would he be, who should use his organs of mastication expressly for the benefit of the delicate and the indolent, than he, who would discourage intellectual exertion, and minister to that natural slothfulness and aversion to persevering toil, which, *without* cultivation, are the chief obstacles in the way of high attainments. Happily for the cause of classical learning in New England, these mercenary products of perverted experience, are limited in their circulation, and are entirely discarded in many of our first seminaries.

Again, a good method of instruction requires *time* as well as labor, for the accomplishment of its ends. "Hasten slowly," is an adage singularly appropriate to classical training. Mechanical devices are not alike ap-

plicable to matter and mind. The progress towards perfection, in any science, must necessarily be slow. The mind itself must grow with the difficulties to be surmounted. Substantial acquirements in the science of the languages, must be the result of long and patient investigation. Artificial helps may sometimes facilitate, but do not really hasten the progress of the student.

The great secret of successful teaching, does not lie in petty artifices to make the task of the learner easy, by ingeniously explaining and illustrating everything which is not readily comprehended, but in wisely directing his mind to become its own expositor ; and in so arranging the subjects of knowledge, that each in turn may be made the interpreter of the rest. But such a process requires time. The same ground must be traversed again and again. Particularity and accuracy must be insisted on at every step, and every principle carefully treasured in the memory.

Nothing is more prejudicial to classical learning in this country, than the hurry and impatience which attend the early stages of education in this department. The most skilful plans of instruction prove in a great measure unavailing, when the teacher is beset with importunities, to haste forward the learner beyond his ability to do his work faithfully. In some preparatory classical schools, this evil is not felt ; but in most, the efforts of teachers, however wisely directed, are repulsed by the limitation set to them by erroneous public sentiment. The Colleges lay out the work to be done in the preparatory schools, and it is a work of full three years ; and in ordinary cases, it cannot be well done in less time. But it is the prevailing opinion, that one third of this time, at least,

would be wasted. Instances are often cited to the praise of young linguists, who in a moiety of the time mentioned, have not only fitted for college, but have actually vaulted over the heads of the novitiates, and entered upon the second degree of college honors.

It is a groundless expectation, that a thorough mode of teaching will save time under our present system of classical education. So long as there is no fixed standard of attainments for admission to College, and more regard is paid to the fulfilment of the letter than the spirit of the requisitions of the initiatory rules, so long will students be tempted to hurry over the preparatory ground, and preference will be given to that mode of teaching, which will do the work in the least time. But the nature of classical training does not admit of competition in regard to time. For, in a given amount of classical reading in the early stage of instruction, the more *thorough*, the slower must be the progress. I mean not the *real*, but apparent progress.

This temptation, therefore, offered to young students to hurry over their first stage of classical study, must in some way be resisted, and they must be persuaded to take time sufficient for their work to be well done, before they can enjoy the invaluable privilege of a right method of instruction.

3. Again, classical teaching cannot be well done without adequate provisions for the work.

The teacher himself should love the study of the classics, and be imbued with their spirit. He should be exclusively devoted to his profession, which is ample enough for the most gifted minds. It is peculiarly unfortunate for both teachers and students, that schools,

in which no branches but such as are preparatory for college are taught, are not better appreciated by the friends of classical learning.

Our Academies are for the most part a compound of every thing. They are generally, as they ought to be, devoted to the benefit of the surrounding communities. They gather in the youth, who aim at a reputable business education, or at the laudable employment of teaching in the primary departments of knowledge. For these classes, they do a useful and highly important service. But amidst this confusion of sciences, and under other heavy burdens of his station, it is not in the power of the teacher to do justice to classical studies. In such circumstances, it is impossible for him to advance in knowledge, or to keep alive in himself and his pupils the zeal and interest necessary to eminent success.

If in the common business of life, efficiency and skill result from directness and individuality of effort, much more is it so in a professional calling, in which the knowledge of a single branch of learning can never be perfected. Classical schools are distinct from others in their character and aims. They should likewise be distinct in their organization. Their importance justifies peculiar attention. They are the first of the three stages in the system of liberal studies. In them, therefore, the system of instruction and discipline, should have a single reference to the higher seminaries to which they are introductory. The interests of classical learning are not only greatly promoted by the endowment of separate schools for that object, but absolutely demand their existence to ensure efficiency in the mode of instruction.

Having premised that there is no labor saving scheme,

which can be relied on for success in teaching the languages ; and that a due allowance of time should be granted for accomplishing the appointed work, and that the teacher himself should be free from the burden of promiscuous cares, and that schools for classical training should be distinctly devoted to this object ; I proceed to offer a few suggestions as to the best method of imparting classic instruction, in the circumstances contemplated in the foregoing remarks.

The question, which of the languages, the Latin or the Greek, should be studied first, is of little importance.

Each may be acquired without the aid of the other ; and their elementary principles are substantially the same. To commence both simultaneously, serves rather to perplex the learner, than to relieve him from the monotony of studying them separately. At an advanced stage, however, both advantage and pleasure are derived from pursuing them together. The usual method of beginning with the Latin language first, is perhaps the least objectionable.

It was formerly the custom, and is still customary in some Latin schools, to require the whole Grammar of the language to be committed to memory before applying the principles in translating. It is claimed that this mode of teaching is strictly synthetical, and the best adapted to the study of language. It may be replied, that the mode in which Geometry is taught is likewise synthetical ; but what teacher would think of imposing the Herculean task of storing the memory with all the problems and theorems of Euclid before allowing one to be demonstrated ?

It is a natural curiosity to see a principle proved, illustrated, and applied, as soon as it is acquired. It seems

unphilosophical to force the learner through a labyrinth of unintelligible formulas, and to require him to suspend the exercise of the higher intellectual faculties, for the mechanical drudgery of cumbering his memory with principles which he can neither understand nor apply.

On the opposite extreme, is a method which has found its advocates, and to which there is still an occasional resort by the *student*, if not by the teacher, of acquiring the languages through the medium of literal, or interlinear translations. It proposes to relieve the learner from traversing the barren wastes of grammatical forms and technicalities, and save him from those painful exertions of memory and thinking, which are so apt to create *uneasiness* under the several methods.

But it has been found, after all, not so easy a thing to level Atlas, or build a railroad over the Alps. The rugged heights of science are to be ascended, step by step, by long repeated and undiscouraged efforts. If by any devices, the acquisition of the languages *could be* made easy, they would soon be discarded from the system of disciplinary education. But such a result is not likely to follow from such a cause. The difficulties will still remain, and the most important inquiry, is not how these difficulties may be facilitated by the teacher, but how they shall be met by the learner, so as to secure to him the greatest advantage.

A foreign language may be learned by oral instruction; but as this mode consumes more time than can generally be spared by teachers, statements of the same facts which might be communicated orally, are incorporated in books called Grammars and Lexicons, which in an important sense are the mouth of the teacher. Of these



statements or facts, the linguist must gain the complete mastery before his knowledge of the language is perfected.

As hinted above, to store these in the memory, without regard to their mutual bearings and connexion, would be an irksome and fruitless labor, and well deserving the sympathy of a veteran teacher, who thought it might be well to relieve boys a little while studying grammar ; “for,” says he, “after they have studied Latin Grammar *a year* closely, they are apt to become weary !”

It should be borne in mind, that the Grammar and the Lexicon serve to relieve the teacher from constantly attending the learner ; and they should be used in the same way, as the aid of the teacher would be employed, if he should communicate the same instruction orally. Were the books named not in existence, the teacher would begin to instruct the pupil in a foreign language, by giving the definitions, forms, and variations of each word in a sentence separately ; then explaining their mutual relations. He would use such principles only as were necessary for his present purpose. This he could do with much more advantage and despatch by the aid of a grammar, which not only embodies facts and principles, but has them arranged in systematic order, for convenience in reference. In a proper method of instruction, the arrangement of the grammar, which long experience has sanctioned, will be regarded as the most natural and philosophical. But as the most simple sentence in Latin or Greek, involves grammatical principles, which are found in sectional divisions of the Grammar widely distant from each other,—in teaching beginners, for the sake of giving variety and interest, it is better to combine, to

some extent, parts which treat of different subjects. For example, Etymology is next in the order of grammatical arrangement after Orthography ; but the simplest sentence involves the relations of subject and predicate ; a few general principles of syntax, introduced in the early part of the course, in which the forms and variations of words are the particular subject of investigation, will give a wider scope in furnishing exercises, and relieve the tedious monotony of committing the paradigms to memory, without examples for illustration and practice. But while the learner is engaged in a particular subject, whatever foreign to it is introduced, need not divert his attention from his principal object. Each declension of nouns and adjectives, each conjugation of the verbs, each rule in syntax, should in its turn be made the special subject of examination, and never be dismissed until perfectly apprehended and engraven on the memory. When the learner has completed a general subject of the Grammar, as Etymology or Syntax, by perfecting himself on each topic separately, he is prepared to take a comprehensive view of the whole, and to use each principle, or form, as occasion requires. Nothing can inspire the learner with more alacrity, confidence, and ardor, than this thorough mode of doing his work. He moves in a continual sunshine. He encounters new difficulties with fresh courage ; and however rugged the way may be before him, he is never disheartened by retrospection.

This mode of studying the Latin Grammar, by topics requiring principles to be put in practice, and proved at every step, cannot be too highly recommended. It demonstrates to the student that the grammar is good for

something, and that no real progress can be made in the study of a foreign language without its aid.

Since the grammar of a language is merely the embodiment of the principles and forms of that language, and, to be complete, must necessarily comprise minute details of all the variations from general statements, it cannot conveniently be made to serve the additional purpose of a *Chrestomathy*, or *Reader*. A book containing the general principles of grammar, with exercises for illustration and practice, is found to be convenient both for the teacher and the learner. Such a book, when properly constructed, will so judiciously combine different subjects of the Grammar, that the exercises may be considerably varied and extended at the commencement of the study. Thus, the understanding and the memory may work together, and the course of the learner be disciplinary, as well as progressive in the principles of the language. On such a plan, whether he pursues the study a longer or shorter time, his labor is not lost. The intellectual faculties are thus employed to good advantage, and if the knowledge obtained is not practically useful, the mental discipline amply compensates for the time and pains.

The importance of beginning right in learning the language, is not apt to be duly estimated. The period from the commencement of the Latin or Greek Grammar, to entering upon the study of classical authors, is generally decisive as it regards future success. Superficial instruction in this stage seldom fails to engender weariness and disgust with classical studies. If there is deficiency here, the ground should be immediately retraced, or the pursuit abandoned altogether. For to advance without a knowl-

edge of principles, is like dragging the naked body over a way beset with crags and thorns. No expenditure of time and labor necessary to ground the beginner thoroughly in the first principles of the language he is pursuing, should be deemed too great. Carelessness and neglect in the outset, are fatal to good scholarship, and encompass the learner's further path with obstacles and discouragements. They serve not only to create in him a distaste for one of the noblest studies, but to involve him in obscurity and uncertainty at every step in his progress; and the knowledge he may acquire will be the result rather of *guessing* shrewdly than of investigating intelligibly.

The method has already been suggested, by which the learner may become familiar with the elementary principles of the languages, saved from that monotonous formality and mechanical drudgery incident to the former custom of lumbering the memory with barren forms and rules, which he is quite sure to forget before he finds use for them.

I now proceed to propose an exercise for the learner, who has become familiar with the variations of the declinable parts of speech, with the paradigms of verbs and the more general rules of syntax, which exercise will bring into constant practice the knowledge he has already obtained, and afford him material aid in the solution of difficulties.

Hitherto he has examined subjects separately. The noun, the adjective, the verb, and other parts of speech, have each in turn invited his attention. In syntax, he has been taught the relations which exist between subject, attribute, and object, the use of connectives, and the re-

lation of each of the oblique cases to the parts of speech with which they may stand connected in construction.

At this stage, there is need of an exercise which shall show the propriety of the grammatical divisions which have been observed, and at the same time the application of the principles of grammar in the composition of discourse. This exercise is called Grammatical Analysis, which consists in explaining the relations which exist between different words in the same sentence, or between the different propositions which compose a compound sentence.

Up to this point, the method of instruction has been mainly *synthetic*; the learner is now prepared to prove by *analysis* the statements he had before taken upon trust. He may, if he chooses, begin to make a Grammar for himself; although he will not have the presumption to lay aside his old one, which he will continue to value more and more, as his companion and counsellor.

A new field now opens to the student in the study of the languages. By the aid of analysis, which is easily comprehended even by the juvenile pupil, he discovers with surprising facility, the relations which exist between the different parts of a sentence, which clause contains the leading fact, and which denotes the time, or cause, or purpose, of the transaction described. He perceives the power and office of the connective and relative words, and attaches to them a new importance.

After this general dissection is performed, the words in each member of the sentence can be arranged in their natural order, and their particular relations pointed out according to the rules of Grammar.

He may go still further, and examine each word separate-

ly, with a view to detect any deviations from the usual forms of the class to which it belongs. The learner will, in this manner, form the habit of close and cautious investigation, as salutary in mental discipline, as it is necessary to correct scholarship. The student will derive a rich reward from devoting much time and labor to this exercise. It will unfold to him the structure and philosophy of language, and aid him materially in the solution of difficult passages.

Next after the first reading book, which should be as far as possible a compilation of easy classical matter, the student may be introduced to some simple classical author in Latin, such as Nepos or Cæsar, or as Xenophon in Greek. When he has gathered what information he is able respecting the character of the author, the age in which he wrote, and the subject of which he treats, he may proceed to the pleasing task of interpreting the language. His first aim is to understand clearly the structure of the sentence under inspection ; then, beginning with the leading member, he gives a literal version into his vernacular tongue, following exactly the logical order of the connexion and dependence of the clauses. He now calls to aid all his previous knowledge, but still finds many things inexplicable by the general principles he has acquired. He repairs anew to his Grammar, where he will find in its details, which have before appeared barren of meaning, a key for the solution of his difficulties. Although his version at the first view, may not be perfectly intelligible—if his knowledge of the grammatical relations is correct, he may be allowed to proceed in the same way through the first lesson, which should be very short.

Subsequent recitations may be conducted something in the following manner ; first, the grammatical analysis



and literal translation of every sentence in the advance lesson ; second, a careful review of the preceding lesson ; third, a comparison of similar constructions, and idioms in both. It is useful for the student to keep with him a note-book, to which he may transfer phrases and idiomatic clauses, which are of difficult interpretation. These he may, at his leisure, treasure in his memory, increasing his stock as he advances, and deriving aid from it at the recurrence of similar difficulties. At the weekly, monthly, and quarterly reviews, which should be kept up during the entire course of study, the student may be required to epitomize the portion of the discourse or treatise he has perused, and give a general analysis of the topics or arguments in the order and connection in which they were presented.

The importance of reviewing frequently cannot be too strongly urged, especially in the early stages of the learner's progress ; and were it even required that the first fifty pages of every new author he reads should be committed to memory, and translated verbatim without the book, the benefit which would result from such an exercise, would more than compensate for the extra time and effort devoted to it. He would thus have a miniature of the author's style imprinted on his memory, and make the portion he is master of, the expositor of the rest.

Among general exercises, the one next in importance to reviewing, is giving free translations, in writing, into our vernacular language. Besides the practical benefit of such an effort at composition, in cultivating the habit and the power of using language with freedom and propriety, it enables the learner, by comparing the two languages together, to understand their difference in re-

spect to arrangement and construction, and to detect in each deviations from the general laws which pertain to both. It likewise brings into play faculties of the mind which are not exerted in the ordinary exercises, and affords a useful variety in the routine of common duties. It may be commenced early, and should attend the learner during the whole course of his classical education.

There is difference of opinion in respect to the order in which the Latin classical authors may be read to the most advantage. Nepos and Cæsar, in the judgment of all, take the precedence. Some of the works of Cicero, as for example his treatises on Friendship and Old Age, or the selection of Orations commonly read in classical schools, seem well adapted to follow in the course. The vigorous and animated, yet tasteful and simple style of this author, invest his writings with a charm and interest which students will early begin to appreciate.

The study of classical poetry is encompassed with more difficulties than that of prose. Since elegance of diction, and a graceful metrical movement, constitute some of the most attractive charms of poetry, the choice and arrangement of words on which these beauties of Latin verse depend, frequently involve the sentence in obscurity, and cause the learner much perplexity in unfolding the meaning. Indeed, the obstacles to the progress of the learner, who is not considerably advanced in knowledge and discipline, arising from the tropical use of language, and the fanciful collocation of words, are almost insurmountable. Contrary, therefore, to what has been the custom of many classical schools, the study of poetry should occupy a place nearer to the last, than to the first stage of a classical course. The value of the

study of Latin or Greek Poetry, as a mental discipline, under a proper method of instruction, cannot be over-estimated. No study can contribute more to the cultivation of the imagination and taste ; none requires more skill and labor in interpretation ; none opens a wider field for investigation. The ancient poets wrote with care, and adorned their works with an elaborate finish, and the most graceful ornaments of style. If the classical scholar would linger anywhere in his toilsome way to gather flowers, it is *here*. Nowhere else will he find language in so varied and beautiful combinations. He may with profit and delight pause at every verse, and examine attentively every word.

I have time to offer only a few suggestions on the mode in which poetry may be studied to the best advantage. Versification is the first subject that invites attention. In this connexion, a new topic in grammar is introduced. The synthetic method must first be adopted in the study of prosody. Its rules, with their variations, may be stored in the memory, and then applied to assist in metrical divisions. A careful and particular analysis of every line, may be practised, until the learner acquires a facility in dividing verses into the feet denoted by the metre. He may now proceed with a strict regard to proper accentuation, observing the cæsural pauses, to read the verse rhythmically. In order to acquire a steady uniform movement, a whole class should be accustomed to read simultaneously. Little benefit will be derived from this exercise, if the art of scanning is imperfectly attained. For otherwise, he will neither be able to verify the rules of his grammar, nor detect their inaccuracy. But if he is perfected in it, he will be able to determine for himself the quantity of every Latin word used in poe-

try, and consequently its true pronunciation ; for the place of accent in every Latin word is known by the quantity of its penult. In connexion with the study of versification may be introduced a method of pronunciation. Hitherto the learner may have been guided by a few general principles, and assisted by marks denoting the place of accent, but he is now prepared to study the subject intelligibly. With a little time and pains, he may attain to a correct pronunciation, which will save him from many mortifying blunders in after life.

Next to versification, the learner proceeds to the task of interpreting the meaning. The method of analyzing before described, has a twofold advantage in poetry. It will materially assist him in reducing to their natural order the words which have been intermixed and arranged according to the capricious fancy of the poet, for metrical accommodation. The chief difficulties which meet the student in his first attempts at translating poetry, are confusion in the order of construction ; the difference in the collocation of words between poetry and prose ; and the figurative use of language. In overcoming the first two, he will be aided by analysis, and especially by a careful reference to grammatical figures in the grammar ; to overcome the third will require much practice, but great assistance will be derived from consulting the section in grammars on Tropes and Figures of Rhetoric, and rhetorical treatises on the same subject. Great care and discrimination are needful in teaching learners the just power and import of tropical words. The beauty of poetical diction is lost, when it is barbarously stripped of its figurative dress, and lamely interpreted according to the literal import of the words. To appreciate the ele-

gance of tropical language, the same image should be vividly impressed on the mind of the reader, which existed in the imagination of the writer.

This image is lost in the English version, unless every feature and shade are exactly copied from the original. Here, then, is a critical and arduous work for a teacher of the languages. But severe and critical as it is, the mind that loves to dwell upon the wonders and beauties of language, will never be tired of it.

The last topic which I shall be able to introduce, is the writing of Latin and Greek. Its importance is admitted by all. Yet few attain to eminent skill in this kind of composition. But it is well known from the history of the past, as well as from examples of the present age, that a degree of skill is attainable, whereby the ancient languages may be made the vehicle of thought both in speaking and writing, and that this knowledge has been obtained through the medium of the same classical books which we possess. Why do we not witness the same proficiency with us? In many preparatory schools, the writing of Latin and Greek is entirely omitted. In a multitude of others, it is merely an exercise upon the forms and variations of the Parts of Speech, and an illustration of the general principles of grammar, useful as far as it goes, but discontinued by the student before his work is fairly begun. The impetuous haste which impels our youth forward, as upon the wings of the wind, forbids the hope of extensive attainments in any branch of classical knowledge, until the evil can be arrested. This is especially true of the branch under contemplation. The process of learning to compose or converse in a foreign language, by the aid of books alone, must be gradual; it is a work

of time, and although it has been, and can be accomplished, yet it is the result of protracted and patient study. But under our present system of classical training, a branch requiring so much time, must necessarily be left unfinished ; still whatever is done should be well done. The foundations may be faithfully laid, if the superstructure is not raised. Inquiries naturally arise, at what period in study should writing Latin or Greek commence ? what is the best mode of conducting the exercise ?

One of the most useful appendages to a classical school room is the Blackboard ; upon this, at the very first recitation, the learner may begin to write, first the cases of a noun, and of an adjective, agreeing in declension with the noun ; then he may write them both, side by side. Other nouns and adjectives of the same class, may be written with their definitions only. The English of the different cases may be given him to be expressed in Latin or Greek, as the case may be. He may gradually proceed to other combinations, as the substantive joined to another in the genitive, with adjectives agreeing with each ; the different declensions of nouns and adjectives compared with written exercises. After a variety of such exercises, which may be multiplied to any extent, he may be required to write from memory the paradigms of the verbs in short lessons, illustrated by simple exercises for translating English into Latin. If such a practice is persevered in, it will not be long before the learner will acquire not only a familiar acquaintance with the forms of words, but a facility in composing simple sentences. This practice may be continued with the aid of books properly arranged, with very little inconvenience to the teacher, but with immense advantage to the student. When the class is considerably advanced,



they may alternately prepare English sentences for each other to turn into Latin or Greek, employing only such Latin and Greek words as had been previously used. A great variety of exercises of this character, may be introduced in the early part of a course of study, which serve to cultivate habits of observation, and to secure an intimate acquaintance with the forms of words and the general rules of construction. In addition to these, there should be stated exercises from some book like Krebb's Guide for Writing Latin, and Sophocles' Greek Exercises, in which the idioms of the languages are to a considerable extent explained and illustrated.

From repeated efforts and practice in the manner described, aided by a careful and thorough examination of the classical authors designated in the course of study, it cannot be doubted, that far more satisfactory attainments may be made in the study of the classics, than it is our pleasure generally to witness. If the student would become a proficient in reading the languages, nothing will better promote that object, than the practice of writing them ; and on the other hand, but little skill and certainty can be ensured in *writing*, without a constant resort to the pure fountains of the original.

It is impossible, in one short essay, to enter minutely into all the details of a method of classical instruction. There are a thousand ways which a skilful teacher may devise, to effect his principal design. It is unfortunate for the cause of classical learning, that so few teachers are entirely devoted to the work in that department, and that there is so large a number of schools in which it is impracticable to carry out a systematic mode of instruction. Hundreds of young men are ignorantly betrayed into

these, and suffer an irretrievable loss in the deficiency of their early training.

Higher demands on the part of those institutions which exert a controlling influence upon the feeblers lights that surround them, would ultimately effect a change in the system of instruction, most salutary for the cause of education. They would encourage the establishment and the patronage of preparatory schools, where plans of instruction could be formed and executed, which would secure to every youth, in the process of classical learning, what is now the privilege of a few, the inestimable advantage of a regular and thorough course in his elementary studies.

## LECTURE VII.

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ON

## SCHOOL DISCIPLINE.

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BY JOSEPH HALE,

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School, Boston.

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BEFORE proceeding to my subject, I wish to premise, that the government of the school-room is naturally parental ; and that the teacher is bound to act, as far as possible, with parental feelings ; and to appeal, for all purposes, to the most appropriate motives, that a true heart and sound mind may select, among all those that God has implanted in our nature ; preferring always the higher to the lower ; but rejecting none, which circumstances may render fitting ; not even the fear of physical pain ; for I believe that that, low as it is, will have its place, its proper sphere of influence, not for a limited period merely, till teachers become better qualified, and society more morally refined, but while men and children continue to be human ; that is, so long as schools and schoolmasters and government and laws are needed.

I shall speak more of principles than of the manner of their application ; and passing by, as needing no support, those means which all admit, shall direct my humble efforts to defending those, the propriety of whose use is denied by some in grave argument, and questionably admitted by many, especially of those whose relations to society are such, that they seldom witness any outward manifestation of the lower and less refined principles of human nature. I am aware that the title of my lecture has a wide range, and includes an infinite variety of means and motives. I shall omit to dwell upon the higher motives, not because I undervalue them, but because they are never called in question. I will only say, then, that kindness, forbearance, expostulation, appeals to the moral feelings to any extent which the circumstances will admit, are always to be used.

I consider the teacher clothed with parental authority, not only because he stands *in loco parentis* by consent of law and common opinion, but because we know not how else to regard him. The teacher's authority is, indeed, naturally derived from the parent. But actually to refer all the petty punishments of little children to the parents, besides being impracticable, would imply want of confidence in the teacher, and weaken the tie that binds him to the pupil. Moreover, without relieving the teacher, it would impose upon the parent a task that does not belong to him ; and needlessly tempt the child to misrepresent his case. There is much sound philosophy in the old-fashioned threat, " If I know of your being whipped at school, I'll whip you again when you get home." Such firm support of the teacher has a far better effect upon the child, than the opposite course of

listening to complaints and nurturing in his mind disaffection and distrust. It begets parental interest in the teacher, and filial affection in the pupil. Teachers ought to be worthy of such support and confidence. Indeed, worthy or unworthy, we cannot help trusting them, if we commit our children to their care. They will make their own "mark upon them," if they make any, guard their influences as we may. Children will, at least so far as their own susceptibilities favor it, and to some extent despite of them, imbibe the real sentiments of their teachers. For, though like men and women they are immediately influenced and controlled by superficial manner, they have much discrimination in reading motive, however concealed.

What, then, is the basis of school discipline? The fundamental principles upon which it is established, are of more importance than the details of any method for applying those principles in practice. If our theory be sound, common sense, rendered skilful by practical experience, will suggest the means best adapted to suit particular cases, without a description of those cases, infinitely varied as they must be. But, on the other hand, if our theory be false, however many facts we may bring to its support, it must work mischief in the main. For the good which it seems to effect, in those instances that do not fairly test it, is out-balanced by the evil it occasions in those which do show its deficiencies. Besides, though good may come out of evil, we are commanded not to "do evil that good may come." We may indeed arrive at truth through error; still it is the truth, and not the error, which is the vital principle of good. The idea I wish to advance is, that we must not forsake the guidance of an internal light, and infer too much from apparent results.

We are too apt, in moral subjects, to suppose a theory established, when it has been but partially tested. Conclusions drawn from moral experiments must always be extremely unsafe ; because numberless modifying circumstances greatly affecting the results, may not be known, much less defined. In physics, experiment is a sure test. Nitrogen and oxygen, combined in the proper proportions, form atmospheric air ; and oxygen and hydrogen, water ; you can combine your simples, and be sure of your compound ; all foreign substances may easily be excluded from it. But as you advance from mere inorganic matter to even vegetable life, you must count upon your results with less of certainty. Of two plants, apparently alike, and nurtured with equal care, one may flourish, the other wither and die ; and for reasons which you cannot explain. As you rise into animal life, the difficulty increases. A young student in medicine having an English patient laboring under a fever, allowed him chicken-broth, and he got well. He made a memorandum in his case-book, "Chicken-broth cures a fever." He soon after had a French patient, similarly sick ; the same prescription was ordered, and he died. He then entered in his case-book, "Though chicken-broth cures an Englishman in a fever, it kills a Frenchman." The young disciple of Galen did not take into view quite all the circumstances in the case. As you advance still higher, from animal, to the study of intellectual and moral existence, mere experiment becomes, more and more, an unsatisfactory guide. While therefore, in chemistry and natural philosophy, we may safely infer a general principle or rule from a limited number of facts, and sometimes even from a single fact, yet in the science of mind and



ethics, it becomes us to use great caution in reasoning from a part to the whole.

Such then being the vague nature of moral reasoning, it is the very region for self-deception ; the region in which the soul is in danger of being led away from innate truth, by the bewildering sophistries of misapplied logic. In imparting moral and mental culture, the teacher's influence may be modified by a thousand varying circumstances, both seen and unseen, external to the child, and inherent in him, over which the teacher can exercise but a very limited control. We can never say, in the moulding of character, these are our materials, and these are our circumstances, and such and such will be our results. Education, here, with all her boasted powers, must

“ Learn to labor and to wait ;”

leaving much, in faith, for the child to work out himself. In mind and morals therefore, truth is to be obtained from a close introspection of our own internal modes of being, guided through faith, by the Divine teachings of inspiration. Collateral aid may indeed be derived from a close and searching study of the elements of character, as they are developed and manifested in the actions of others. The last, however, is not alone sufficient to settle our conclusions.

A ship with no compass may keep her way secure, when near the shore, with beacon-lights and land-marks to guide her. But at sea, with trackless water around her, and darkness overhead, she is blind, without that inner light, to point her to the pole and designate her path. The deceitful whirl of external objects may make the north seem south, and east seem west ; but a glance

at the faithful needle banishes all doubt and confusion, and, with adjusted helm, she in an instant finds her track, and onward presses to her destined port. Nature is the compass to guide us through the mazy track of training childhood up to that condition of healthy thoughtfulness and steady self-control, which should be the destined aim of education. If we leave out from our philosophy any of the constituent elements of human nature, we destroy the equilibrium, and well-balanced character cannot be formed. We must take human nature as it is. Nothing can circumvent divinely-ordained law. We can neither by assertion and argument add to, nor by denial and objection, remove from nature, a single element. Education can neither create nor destroy ; but only develop and construct character out of what previously exists, and all the constituents of human nature may come in to help in the formation of any individual character. In truth, all real knowledge, and all real character, are from within. Education, and in that term I include all reciprocal influences whatever, education draws out from the individual, (as the primitive word *educo*, to draw out, implies,) whatever intrinsic results it produces. It is the occasion, and not the cause of thought. It furnishes aliment as something foreign, which the mind, by its own inherent energy, must digest and assimilate. Its office is to strengthen by exercise and culture that which is too weak, and to weaken by disuse and opposition, that which is too active and strong ; to subdue the lower to the higher principles, and to produce thus the most perfect and harmonious whole. If we move all mind to action by an appeal to one motive mainly, we distort character greatly ; if we appeal to a few leading motives we distort it, though less ;

if we adopt the principle of overlooking a single one even, we may, and in many instances unquestionably shall come short of the best results. Everything is to be used as not abusing it. Nothing is to be despised. Emulation, alone or principally, for all minds, is very objectionable ; so is fear ; so is sympathy ; so is the pride of intellect ; or the pride of virtue. So are any or all of them combined, to the exclusion of some other principle which as really exists as any of these ; for that one, whatever it may be, has its uses, and may in certain individuals be the very one which needs strengthening.

In regard to the use of emulation, the following passage from an able writer,\* fully expresses my views. "The conclusion then to which we come is—that it is not a question whether emulation is to be admitted into schools, for it will exist there whether we will or no. *Non scripta ; sed nata lex ; quam non didicimus, accepimus, legimus, verum ex natura ipsa arripuimus, hausimus, expressimus ; ad quam non docti ; sed facti ; non instituti ; sed imbuti sumus ;*—that since nature has admitted its existence we are to allow it ; but always to apply it where most needed and to endeavor to combine it with higher principles. Finally, to direct it only to worthy objects, and teach it to submit to the regulations of a sagacious justice. In a public school, every boy has a share of reputation, which can be measured out to him with almost mathematic certainty ; let him take it and therewith be content. Within these bounds emulation

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\* Rev. Leonard Withington. Lecture on Emulation in Schools, before the American Institute of Instruction, in 1833.

may fire the genius, (*Æmulatio alit ingenia*) without inflaming the passions or corrupting the heart."

But upon what shall school discipline be based? I answer unhesitatingly, upon *authority* as a starting-point. As the fear of the Lord is the beginning of divine wisdom, so is the fear of the law, the beginning of political wisdom. He who would command even, must first learn to obey. That implicit obedience to rightful authority must be inculcated and enforced upon children, as the very germ of all good order in future society, no one, who thinks soundly and follows out principles to their necessary results, will presume to deny. Yet, it is quite offensive now-a-days to ears polite, to talk of authority and command, and injunction. We must persuade, and invite, and win. Respect for law is hardly sufficient to insure the infliction of its severer penalties. Thus the restraining influence of fear is ineffectual where most needed. Penalties, being too much dreaded by the innocent, are, for that very reason, too little dreaded by the guilty; who soon learn to avail themselves of the protecting shield that overstrained mercy casts before them.

The present is an age remarkable for the ascendancy of sympathy over the sterner virtues. Kindness, powerful, overwhelming in its proper sphere, has assumed a false position; has stepped beyond the limits of its legitimate control, and, having wrought such mighty magic with human misery and guilt through the benevolent labors of Howard, Fry, Dix, and a host of others less widely known but equally deserving, seems almost ready to be crowned the omnipotent regenerator of the race, to purge the heart from sin and sanctify it unto holiness.

But, in our admiration of the efficacy of one agent, we must not despise or overlook the value of others. Kindness cannot supply the place of authority, nor gratitude that of submission. I admit that the easiest, and where the doctrine of subordination is not questioned, the best way to gain a compliance with our wishes is, to allure to it by kind treatment and agreeable manners ; but I deny that such compliance is any test of the spirit of obedience. True obedience is a hearty response to acknowledged authority. It does not voluntarily comply with a request, but implicitly yields to a command. When the mandate has gone forth, obedience does not obtain, till the will of the subject is merged completely in the will of the ruler. Sympathy may render obedience a pleasant act, and indeed may alone produce a prompt compliance, when simple authority would be powerless. Care should be taken not to confound generosity with justice, voluntary consent with unconditional surrender. Actions which are externally alike, often spring from motives which are widely different, and even opposite. Obedience recognises the existence of abstract authority ; and all authority originates in the highest source. St. Paul writes to the Romans, " Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God ; the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God."

It is here plainly shown to be the bounden duty of all, to recognise and obey rightful authority wherever it exists in the great chain, from the highest to the lowest ; and distinctly as authority ; not waiting for the dictates of inclination or feeling ; not demanding to know the reason of the command, as a necessary condition of obedience ;

but simply asking if it be really the voice of rightful authority that speaks. On the other hand, this duty on the part of the subject, clearly implies an equal obligation on every one in whom authority is vested, firmly to maintain it, to insist upon obedience, and to accept no substitute, unless he feels an honest necessity for doing so. The ruler is to demand submission, not to himself, from a feeling of personal superiority, but to the station he fills, from a respect in his own mind for the abstract relation of order and authority. His own right he may waive, "not rendering evil for evil, but contrariwise blessing." But the authority vested in the relation he sustains, he may not thoughtlessly yield up ; it is not at his disposal. He governs not for his own sake, but to teach obedience to others. The governed, on his part, is not, from sympathy and affection, and harmony of opinion, to obey the individual, but the authority residing in him rather, from a sense of obligation. These distinctions are especially important, in dealing with children ; because they are apt to be led by caprice. Moreover, since dependence is the distinguishing feature of childhood, the kindred doctrine of unconditional subordination is more easily taught, the earlier it is attempted. Probably few persons, who have not noticed children expressly for the purpose, have discovered what a modifying influence it has upon a child of strong will, to establish in his mind the necessity of yielding to the will of another. It is common to sneer at this idea of subjugation, and to call it "*breaking the will*," and destroying the free spirit ; and we often hear and even approve the proud boast, "You may coax, but you cannot drive me." This bespeaks strong impulse, and so far promises well for the individual ; but when said with reference



to rightful command, it indicates a will impatient of rational restraint ; it means, " I am weak enough to be wheedled by your arts, but have not the strength of purpose to subject my will to your authority" ; in other words, " I acknowledge that my principle is the victim of my feeling ; that it is safer to appeal to my caprice, than to my good sense." An eloquent writer\* of the highest authority, remarks,

" The first step which a teacher must take, I do not mean *in* his course of moral education, but before he is prepared to enter that course, is to obtain the entire, unqualified submission of his school to his *authority*. We often err when designing to exert a moral influence, by substituting throughout our whole system persuasion for power ; but we soon find that the gentle winning influence of moral suasion, however beautiful in theory, will often fall powerless upon the heart, and we then must have authority, to fall back upon, or all is lost. I have known parents, whose principle it was, not to require any thing of the child, excepting what the child could understand and feel to be right. The mother in such a case, forgets that a heart in temptation is proof against all argument ; and I have literally known a case where the simple question of going to bed required a parental pleading of an hour, in which the mother's stores of rhetoric and logic were exhausted in vain. Teachers sometimes too, resolve that they will resort to no arbitrary measures. They will explain the nature of duty, and the happiness of its performance, and lead their pupils to love what is

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\* Rev. Jacob Abbott. Lecture on Moral Education, before the American Institute, in 1831.

right without bringing in the authority of arbitrary command. But the plan fails. However men may differ in their theories of human nature, it is pretty generally agreed by those who have tried the experiment, that neither school nor family can be preserved in order by eloquence and argument alone. There must be authority. The pupils may not often feel it. But they *must know that it is always at hand*, and the pupils must be taught to submit to it as to simple *authority*. The subjection of the governed to the will of one man, in such a way that the expression of his will must be the final decision of every question, is the only government that will answer in school or in family. A government not of persuasion, not of reasons assigned, not of the will of the majority, but of the will of the one who presides."

*Authority*, then, is clearly the starting-point in all government ; the corner-stone of all order. Remove it, and the reign of anarchy and chaos instantly succeeds.

"Let earth unbalanced from her orbit fly,  
Planets and suns run lawless through the sky ;  
Let ruling angels from their spheres be hurl'd,  
Being on being wreck'd, and world on world,  
Heaven's whole foundations to their centre nod,  
And nature trembles to the throne of God."

Let us beware, then, how we worship more advanced and refined elements, to the exclusion of those, which, though lower and of earlier development, are equally general and primarily more important, inasmuch as they are the first to be recognised. The doctrine of allegiance and subjection to that which is above us, is the central essence of all real order. We may unconsciously deny it, and practically oppose its claims, and it is the dictate

of human pride and weakness to do so ; but before we can really and understandingly, and in full view of all our relations and destinies, renounce the doctrine of unconditional submission to that which we feel to be rightful authority, we must declare an individual independence, and take for our motto,

“ Better to reign in hell than serve in heaven.”

It being conceded, however, that authority must not be denied, a beautiful plan is contrived for escaping its exercise, by adroitly evading all occasions for its use. Always tell children to do what they like to do, and you will not need authority. In this way, at least, it may become obsolete. Make everything easy and pleasant and amusing, and you will have nothing to contend with. I answer, it is not possible to make the path of duty always pleasant in itself, either to men or children. To love duty simply as duty is a high moral attainment. However true it may be, that a thing ceases to amuse when it ceases to instruct, the reverse surely is not true, that there can be no instruction without amusement. Education should indeed aim to give us the art of making an amusement of our business ; but it should warn us against the fatal error of attempting to make a business of our amusements. Since its influences are artificial and reforming, it does not merely follow impulses and inclinations, but chiefly resists, and corrects, and trains. Though necessarily relying upon nature, it is not to be wholly passive, but to strengthen, and modify, and improve nature. Its legitimate sphere is, to help nature follow out the processes of art, to profit by past experience, and to train the mind to investigate principles and

resolve things into their constituent elements. The school is to fit us for the world ; and life is more a season of discipline than of amusement. Discipline is the rule ; pleasure the exception. ' Nil sine magno vita labore dedit mortalibus.'

It may strike some as singular, and yet it is perfectly philosophical, that while truth, though containing many seeming paradoxes, has no real ones, error, on the contrary, though appearing to have none, does in reality contain many. For instance, those who have the most faith in education and expect from it the most wonderful results, forget, in their self-gratulation on what has been achieved, how gradual and toilsome has been the process of its achievement ; and flatter themselves that they may bring others to the same high attainments, without so much expense of labor and discipline. They therefore attempt to leave out of education that very artificial training which constitutes essentially the whole of it ; and at the moment when they claim to be independent of nature, come back to follow almost entirely her mere inclinations ; to lean upon the experience of others, to notice merely the superficial relations of things, and to trust for knowledge to the easy process of cursory observation. Now this propensity to observe without analysis, nature provides for without any artificial aid. Indeed, it predominates in children and savages ; while in its most external form, which is mere physical vision, it possesses in some beasts and birds of prey a keenness and quickness which seem almost magical. The deception may be explained, perhaps, upon the principle, that as the forms of knowledge and thought become abundant and widely diffused, they are mistaken for the reality ; and imitative rehearsal of

words is taken as evidence that the ideas they are intended to represent are fully comprehended. It is forgotten, that to skim the surface adroitly shows an incapacity and disrelish for looking far beneath it. That the paradoxes of truth are apparent, and those of error real, should establish in our minds the consoling conviction, that while truth is immortal, error contains the seeds of its own dissolution.

It being admitted, then, not only that authority must be recognised to exist, but also that there will be occasions for calling it into active use, we are brought at once to the evident necessity, in case of resistance or non-compliance, either of abandoning it, or providing the means of enforcing it by actual compulsion. In instances therefore, where, either from the peculiar condition of the subject, or the degree of temptation, the spirit of opposition is too strong to be over-ruled by those higher and more refined motives upon which we should always rely when they are active, we are left without resource unless we appeal to fear. Now the lowest kind of fear has for its object physical pain. It is this that prompts us, in the earliest stages of our development, to the use of care to protect ourselves from harm. Deprive a child of the fear of receiving injury, and, if he were allowed freedom of action, his physical existence even, would be constantly endangered. We see then how indispensable is this sentiment, at that early age, to preserve one safe till the period arrives when he will be fitted for the exercise of those of later development, and which as life advances are to connect him with higher and wider relations. Since, then, fear is most predominant in childhood, being the natural concomitant of weakness and

dependence, we should take advantage of it, and make it subservient to good ends.

But if we admit the use of fear to secure obedience, we must consequently admit the use of punishment ; for nothing can exist in an active state without an object upon which to act. Thus, there can be no fear of that, in the existence of which there is no belief. Here, then, we arrive conclusively at the decision of a point of great importance ; namely, that the doctrine of the use of physical punishment has its foundation in nature and necessity.

Before proceeding any further, I wish, in order not to be misunderstood, to restrict the word punishment to its proper signification ; namely, the legitimate infliction of a penalty for wrong-doing, with a view to promote the good, either of the individual upon whom it is inflicted, or the general good of the community of which he forms a part, and to whose welfare as a whole, his own must be, in some sense, subservient. All capricious and vindictive acts of violence, therefore, under the name of punishment, I set aside as foreign to my subject ; inasmuch as they constitute the abuse, rather than the use, of what I would defend.

Though it may seem to many an unnecessary task, I will attempt to show, what is, to my view, virtually denied by some ; namely, that since we have both a physical and a moral nature, there is necessarily a connection subsisting between the two. So far as I have become acquainted with the objections of those who deny, in all cases, the good effects of the rod, and of course the moral right to use it, even in the family, (for there are a few such,) I have found them to contain one or both of



these two general ideas ; namely, first, that mutual love is the only governing law of our nature, and therefore alone sufficient to sway any individual who has not been impregnated with evil from without ; and second, that whether our nature be originally simple, or composed of two opposite moral elements, physical compulsion not only is not immediately productive of moral obedience, but has no tendency directly or indirectly to lead to it ; in other words, that means in themselves physical cannot produce moral results. I will say no more of the palpable absurdity of denying a connection that we cannot comprehend, than to ask, if all mutual influences, both intellectual and moral, are not exerted by the mediate agency of some physical sense ? Of what use are speaking and writing and acting, if moral and intellectual impulses can as well be made without their intermediate use ? We may as well abjure our physical nature at once, and deny that we are in the body. But the most singular paradox, in regard to these Utopian theorists, is that they seem unconsciously to worship what they most abjure. While they profess to elevate themselves above the region of physical influences, and to scorn their control, it is this very physical organization that they appear most anxious to protect from outrage. They seem willing to forego that sound moral and intellectual training, which they so fully appreciate and so truly prize, rather than to receive it, through the degradation of that lower nature which they affect to despise. They forget that the susceptibilities of a lower nature are properly subservient to the noble purpose of developing and perfecting a higher ; the integrity of the soul is to be maintained at the expense of the suffering of the body. In thus denying the existence

and use of anything base in ourselves, we are left at last, in our very efforts to maintain the purity of the whole, to identify our dignity with the most external part of our nature. We have here another instance of the self-destroying tendency of error. We see how extremes meet ; and that they who seek to rise upon false principles, are sure to fall.

Punishment is of various kinds. It may be a look only ; it may be a word more or less severe ; or it may be a privation ; or a task ; or a restraint upon personal liberty ; or a pecuniary forfeiture ; or a blow. Whatever it be, it must be disagreeable to the receiver, in order to constitute it punishment. Being not persuasive, but compulsory and retributive, it is at first regarded and treated as an enemy ; it thus finds the whole nature in a state of rebellion, and inclined to resist ; consequently the infliction of the penalty is immediately followed by the vexation and chagrin arising from offended pride ; the necessity of yielding ; the mortification of being conquered. Thus far nothing has been done but to develop and bring to light latent evil, and reveal it more clearly to the consciousness of its possessor ; but the final good is not yet attained. At length the unpleasant scene is past ; the pain subsides ; the blinding influence of passion ceases ; the quick instinct of self-defence settles into quiet calmness ; and after a hasty attempt at self-justification, succeed reflection, deliberate thought, unwonted self-examination, and finally, if all is right, conviction of wrong-doing, sincere humiliation, repentance ; which is the true moral fruit. "No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous ; nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness unto

them which are exercised thereby." We see here the true moral of the scourge. We see here how one person, duly responsible for using means to advance the welfare of another beneath him, inflicts physical evil to produce moral good ; the act is evil in relation to the physical nature merely, but good in relation to the moral. Now since by the law of precedence, the former is merged in the latter, the violence of the act is only apparent ; it is really a moral act, as it springs from a moral motive in the doer, and aims at a moral result in the subject. It is too common to speak of corporal punishment as violence and outrage. But it is as much an abuse of language, as it would be to call it an act of outrage to rouse an invalid from a refreshing sleep, in order to save him from being consumed by the flames. A contest between two for mastery, where neither has the right to rule, is an exercise of brute force, and may properly be called violence and outrage. But the true use of the rod, so far from being similar to this, is its direct opposite. It aims to prevent violence, by teaching the necessity of subjection. Physical coercion is but the final appliance of moral suasion ; a means of arousing the attention to those expostulations which should always precede, accompany, or follow it, and of thereby saving them from being disregarded. Indeed, all government must end, if need be, in a resort to physical force. This idea is so beautifully and strongly illustrated by a writer already quoted, that I cannot refrain from borrowing his thoughts again. Mr. Abbott says,

"The government of the United States employs its hundreds of workmen at Springfield and at Harper's Ferry in the manufacture of muskets. The inspector

examines every one as it is finished, with great care. He adjusts the flint—and tries it again and again until its emitted shower of sparks is of proper brilliancy,—and when satisfied that all is right, he packs it away with its thousand companions, to sleep probably in their boxes in quiet obscurity forever. A hundred thousand of these deadly instruments form a volcano of slumbering power, which never has been awakened, and which we hope never will. The government never makes use of them. One of its agents, a custom-house officer, waits upon you for the payment of a bond. He brings no musket. He keeps no troops. He comes with the gentleness and civility of a social visit. But you know that if compliance with the just demands of your government is refused, and the resistance is sustained, force after force would be brought to bear upon you, until the whole hundred thousand muskets should speak with their united and tremendous energy. The government of these United States is thus a mighty engine, working with immense momentum, but the parts which bear upon the citizens conceal their power by the elegance of the workmanship, and by the slowness and apparent gentleness of their motion. If you yield to it, it glides smoothly and pleasantly by. If you resist it, it crushes you to atoms. Such ought to be the character of all government.”

The responsibilities then, of parents, and guardians, and teachers, with such powers in their hands, are momentous. How important that they should be faithful and true, not only as regards instruction, but discipline; faithful to counsel, and reprove, and punish even. If a child is beset with temptation that is likely to prove too strong for him, how cruel, from indolence, or fear of

offending, or a perverse and doting fondness for some wild theory, to abandon him as its victim ; when a little resolute exercise of authority would restore his mind to its balance, and strengthen his power of self-control. Is our ward hungry, let us feed him ; is he disconsolate and depressed, let us comfort and encourage him ; is he struggling with the raging violence, or the sullen obstinacy, or the cool determination of an indomitable will, let us help him all in our power to resist and control it. As the rightful depository of authority in such a case, we are false to our trust if we do not fulfil the relation we sustain between God and our charge, and use all reasonable means in our power to inculcate the most important lesson of life. Remember the judgments that came upon Eli, "because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not."

In conclusion, there is no surer way to diminish the amount of punishment in schools, than to give countenance and support to the teacher. But we tremble for the effect of those misguided notions which make corporal punishment synonymous with brutality ; the prevalence of which has sometimes been evinced in newspaper paragraphs, and placards, and petitions for restraint upon the use of the rod. We cannot but hope, however, that such scenes as have been enacted in Philadelphia will warn the public against the dreadful tendency of resisting legal force. When we once violate a principle it is impossible to know where the consequences may end. Philadelphia, the city of Brotherly Love ! how sadly has she illustrated the danger of elevating sympathy above justice. We forsake authority because we dislike its sterner aspect, and side, perhaps unconsciously, with

anarchy. Rather than arm the law with executive terrors to resist and subdue the guilty, we leave to the cruel mercy of lawless violence the lives and property of the innocent. Thus, shrinking from necessary evils, we plunge into greater and worse ones that might have been avoided.

How careful should men of influence be to guard against encouraging that excessive love of freedom which can brook no restraint. They who know not how to be governed, are surely incapable of that self-government which is the very essence of freedom. If children are brought up with the notion that they are never to be restrained by force, they are in great danger of becoming the victims of lawless and ungovernable passions. Let a respect for law and order, then, be early inculcated in them. Let teachers keep steadily on in the path of duty ; teaching really what they pretend to teach, and governing really where they ought to govern ; listening to the dictates of conscience, and guided more by the fixed principles of a true scriptural philosophy than by the changeful notions of fluctuating experimentalism.



LECTURE VIII.

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ON METHODS

OF

TEACHING TO READ.

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ONE year ago, a lecture was delivered before this Institute, in which a *change* in the modes of teaching children to read, was strongly recommended. The proposed change consists in an inversion of the order in which words and the letters composing them, are usually taught. By the prevailing mode, the child first acquires the letters, then, the art of combining letters into syllables and words, and next, the uses of words in the formation of sentences.

By the *new mode*, on the contrary, the child is first presented with whole words. Having acquired a sufficient number of these, he learns next, to connect them into sentences. Afterwards, he is taught the letters of the Alphabet and the art of combining them into words.

In teaching the art of reading, every one must have observed an ascending series, rising from the simplest element, and reaching to the remotest compound. First, a letter, then a syllable, next a word, then a sentence, a paragraph, a whole discourse.

The child, by the new system, instead of beginning at the origin, commences with the third step of this series, and thence ascends ; at some subsequent period, however, he must descend and take the first step.

By the usual mode, the learner begins at the foundation and proceeds upwards in a regular gradation ; taking first the elements, then their easiest combinations, passing from the simplest to the most difficult. The principle involved in the one, is that of beginning with elements ; in the other, that of beginning with compounds.

In discussing this subject two questions naturally arise.

1st. Is any material change in the modes of teaching children to read really needed ?

2d. Would *such* a change as that of beginning with words before letters, be an improvement upon the customary method ?

In answering the first of these questions, the negative is assumed, not less from a belief that no *material* change is called for, than from a desire that both sides of the question may be fairly represented before this body. By a material change is understood one in which the order of the various steps in the series just alluded to, shall in any way be disturbed. Letters should be taught before words, because they come first in order,—are elements in the formation of words, and are indispensable to a thorough and correct knowledge of them. But, while it is denied that any *material* change should be made, it is

granted that some improved method of teaching the alphabet may be adopted. Much depends upon this, if we would secure the interest and attention of the children. It is not necessary to teach the letters invariably from the vertical column, although the child should be able to repeat them in their order. Letters may be made upon the blackboard, and the children may be allowed to make them upon the slate or on the board. The teacher may be supplied with small pieces of card, each containing a letter, or with metallic letters. Let these be kept in a small box or basket, and when a class is called up to recite, let the teacher hold up one of these letters; one of the class utters its name; let him be required to utter its *power* also. The same should be exacted of the whole class in concert. The teacher may then give the letter to the successful pupil. Let this exercise be continued till a part or all of the letters are distributed. The pupils now, one by one, return the letters to the teacher, who counts the number belonging to each and awards praise where it belongs.

Children may be deeply interested in exercises of this kind, and at the same time be laying the foundation for a thorough course of instruction in reading. After even a few of the letters have been learned, the teacher may present some two or three, so arranged as to spell a familiar word. The pupil should be required first to utter the names of the letters, thus arranged, then their powers. These, he should be taught to join into the word which calls to mind a familiar idea. The process of combination, in this way, becomes easy and interesting. The child readily sees, that words are formed not from the names, but from the *powers* of the letters.

It avails nothing for the defenders of the new system to say, that the *names* of the letters are not elements in the sounds of words ; for no one, so far as is known, ever affirmed that such is the fact.

The word *letter*, as applied to the alphabet, is ambiguous, unless accompanied by some term, or explanatory phrase, to show what is intended. In referring to one of the elementary sounds that enters into the formation of a spoken word, we call that *sound* a letter. So in speaking of the conventional sign, which represents that sound to the eye, as the character *h*, seen in a printed word, that sign we call a letter. Both the sound and the sign take the *name aitch* ; this name in turn is called a letter. To prevent confusion, these three things, the power, the character, and the name should be kept entirely distinct from each other. There is either the sound of the name, or the sound of the power ; the former is called the *name-sound*, and the latter, the *elementary sound* ; so also there is a visible symbol to represent the *name-sound*, as the syllable *be*, *ce*, *aitch*, or *you* ; there is likewise a visible symbol to represent the *elementary sound*, as the letter, *b*, *c*, *h* or *u*. The name sound is as unlike the elementary sound, as the visible representative of the former is unlike that of the latter. Now, if any one has assumed the position, that the names of the letters are elements in the sounds of words, he alone must defend it. Those who favor the usual mode of teaching, are not responsible for such an assumption. They contend that the elementary sounds or powers of letters enter into the formation of spoken words, and that the characters which represent these sounds constitute written or printed words ; and one or both of these two things are

meant, when it is said that letters should be taught before words, because they are elements. How the idea was first originated, that the names of letters were elements in the sounds of words, it is not easy to conceive. One might as well say, that oxygen and hydrogen are not elements in the formation of water, and give as a reason, that water cannot be composed of such uncouth names as *oxygen* and *hydrogen*, as to say that letters are not elements in the formation of words for the reason that their *names* are not heard when words are pronounced.

The assertion may then be made, without fear of contradiction, that the characters called letters are elements in printed words and the sounds which they represent are elements in spoken words. The usual mode of teaching children to read is to be defended, then, upon the ground that it involves the maintenance of a great principle, namely, that in every art or science, the elements should be taught first.

The principle could not be sacrificed without great loss in other branches of education, and it will be our object to show that it cannot be in this. Children might, undoubtedly, from a mere inspection of their forms, learn to repeat numbers from tens to thousands, without learning how to combine the units, the tens or the hundreds, of which they are composed. But if Numeration were thus taught, our decimal system would be bereft of all its value, and would possess little or no superiority of the Greek and Roman numerals. In arithmetical computations, no advantage could be taken of the relation which the different denominations, as units, tens, hundreds, &c., bear to each other. But Addition, Subtraction, Multiplication, and Division must be performed mentally, however large the

numbers to be subjected to these operations. The results, only, could be put down. Arithmetic itself could scarcely compute the loss which would thus be sustained.

Were a pupil to commence Geometry by learning the first theorem, without any previous knowledge of the definitions or axioms, what progress could he be expected to make? He might commit the demonstration to memory, but could not feel the force of the reasoning. The various steps would be to him wholly unintelligible; he could discover none of the beauties of the science. Every step must be taken in the dark, with a blind reliance upon authority. Why is it, that so many abandon this study, in disgust? The reason, in many cases, is obviously this; a tendency to hasten over the dry and uninteresting elements of the science, gains an ascendancy over the pupil or the teacher, or both, and the former is suffered to pass on to what he hopes to find more interesting, before mastering the first principles. Every succeeding effort must prove a failure. Difficulties accumulate as he attempts to advance, till the whole subject is shrouded in gloom. He at length abandons the study in despair.

He must be an unsuccessful teacher of Penmanship who should give for the first lesson an entire word. The letters even, should be analyzed into the several parts of which they are composed. Each of these parts is by the skilful teacher, given to the pupil separately. Each should be formed again and again, till a good degree of facility is acquired; then follows the process of combining these parts into letters, and finally the latter into words.

What would be thought of a teacher of music, who



should suffer, nay, *require* his pupils to play whole tunes upon the pianoforte, before learning the lessons for practice—before knowing anything of the proper manner of placing the fingers upon the keys? Yet such a mode of teaching would not be unlike that of beginning with words before letters. These illustrations might be multiplied indefinitely. Indeed, if we take any of the branches taught in our schools, as Grammar, Arithmetic, Algebra, Geography or any other, it is considered of the highest importance, that the elements be first thoroughly learned. All our text books are made to conform to this general principle; otherwise they would be condemned at once.

Why, then, should an exception be made to this universal rule, in teaching children to read? Several answers have been given to this question, by the friends of the new system. One is, that it is the *natural order* in which children acquire knowledge. They learn to *speak* whole words without attending to their component parts—they learn to comprehend the objects around them without attending to the parts of which they are composed. In learning to recognize a tree, for example, it is said that children do not examine first the trunk, then the bark, the branches, the twigs, the leaves, and the blossoms; but they look upon the tree as a whole object.

Let us see if this illustration will meet the exigencies of the case in teaching reading. It is easy to perceive, that a child in learning to distinguish a tree from a rock, a house, or an ox, would not need to examine the component parts of it, because the aspect of it, as a whole, would be so unlike that of the other objects named, that he would, at once, discover differences so marked as to enable him to distinguish the one from the other.

But in reading, he is to distinguish between objects which resemble each other ; and in many instances very closely, as in the case of the words, *hand, band ; now, mow ; form, from ;* and hundreds of others. To make the illustration good, it would be necessary to place the child in a forest, containing some seventy thousand trees, made up of various genera, species, and varieties, among which were found many to be distinguished only by the slightest differences. If then, this general survey of each of them, as a whole object, will enable him to distinguish them rapidly from each other, whatever may be their size, or the order in which he may cast his eyes upon them, the aptness of the illustration will be acknowledged. Primary school teachers, who have tried the system, testify that when children have learned a word in one connection, they are unable to recognize it, in another, especially if there be a change of type.

But suppose we grant that the illustration *is* good, and that, in teaching reading, it *is* the natural order to begin with whole words. Why, we ask, does not the same principle extend to other branches ? A child learns to utter 456 as a whole number, without thinking of the units, the tens, or the hundreds which compose it. Why not, then, teach him to recognize the printed symbol of that number, as a whole object ? If the principle applies in *one* case it is impossible to see why it *should* not in the other, or, indeed, in every other. And this calls up the main question again. Shall we teach elements first, or shall we begin with combinations ?

But the argument takes another form. It is said that, "if a child be put to learning familiar words first he already knows them by the *ear*, the *tongue*, and the *mind*,

while the *eye* only is unacquainted with them. He is thus introduced to a stranger through the medium of old acquaintances. May it not be said with as much truth, that the numbers 45, 72, 96, &c. are familiar to the *ear*, the *tongue*, and the mind of the child, and that the printed signs of these numbers should be taught as whole objects, because all else pertaining to them are old acquaintances?

Here, it will be seen, is an attempt to claim for the new system the principle of passing from the *known* to the *unknown*. The *meaning* of the word is known,—its *sound* is known,—the child can utter it; hence it is argued, that the child should be put to learning whole words first. The question arises, Is the child deprived of his power of utterance, or of his knowledge of the meaning of words, or of the sound of them when put to learning letters first?

The fallacy will be still more apparent, when we reflect that the term *word* may refer either to the *written*, or to the *audible* signs of our ideas, and is ambiguous unless it is so qualified as to give it a specific reference. In speaking of familiar words, in reference to a child unable to read, nothing can be meant except that the child can utter them; he knows them only as audible signs. To say that printed words are familiar to a child's tongue, can have no other meaning than that he is accustomed to the taste of ink; to say that such words are familiar to his ear is to attribute to that ink a tongue; and to say that they are familiar to the mind, is to suppose the child already able to read. Now, as reading aloud is nothing less than translating *written* into *audible* signs, a knowledge of the latter, whatever may be the system of teaching, is presupposed to exist, and is about as necessary to

the one learning to read, as would be a knowledge of the English language to one who would translate Greek into English.

To illustrate. Take the printed word *mother*;—when pronounced, it is familiar “to the ear, the tongue, and the mind.” Does this familiarity aid the child in the least, in comprehending the printed picture? Can he, from his acquaintance with the audible sign, utter that sign by looking upon the six unknown letters which spell it?

The truth is, in all that belongs, appropriately, to the question under consideration, the word is unknown; unknown as a whole, unknown in all its parts, and unknown as to the mode of combining those parts. The question, when restricted to its proper limits, is simply this; ‘What is the best method of teaching a child to comprehend *printed* words?’ All that is said about the familiarity of the child with the audible sign, and the thing signified by it, is claimed in common by the advocates of both systems, and is, therefore, totally irrelevant in the discussion of this question; since what belongs equally to opposite parties can have no influence in a question in which they differ.

What though “printed names of known things are the signs of sounds which their [the children’s] ears have been accustomed to hear, and their organs of speech to utter, and which may excite agreeable feelings and associations, by reminding them of the objects named?” Is the rose any the less agreeable to the mind of the child, or, is the word *rose*, when pronounced, any the less familiar to his organs of speech or to his ear, because its printed sign is learned by combining the letters r-o-s-e?

Or does the mere act of telling the child to say *rose*, while pointing to the picture formed of four unknown letters, in any way enhance its agreeableness?

The question, then, is not whether a child shall be "introduced to a stranger through the medium of old acquaintances," for, in fact, by the new system, this introduction is made through the medium of the teacher's voice.

The true question at issue is, whether the child shall be furnished with an attendant to announce the name of the stranger, or whether he shall be furnished with *letters* of introduction by which, unattended, he may make the acquaintance, not of some hundred strangers merely, but of the whole seventy thousand unknown members of our populous vocabulary.

But, again, it is said, that the letters of the alphabet are without meaning, that they are "skeleton-shaped," "bloodless," "ghostly apparitions," and hence it is that the children feel so "deathlike" when compelled to face them. True, the letters of the alphabet are not the loveliest pictures that might be presented to children. But if the argument from this source mean any thing, it is this; 1st. That we ought to sacrifice a great principle,—that of teaching the elements first,—because the letters of the alphabet are so ugly and deformed, in their appearance; and, secondly, since they are so "ill-favored" when taken separately, as to create "deathlike" feelings, we ought as philanthropists, to relieve children from such painful emotions by teaching them to examine these shapeless characters, when taken in whole groups, *i. e.* whole clusters of deformity. But the most natural way

of determining the weight of this argument is to see how it will apply in other branches.

Take music, for example ; after arraying nearly all the chilling epithets which are employed to disparage the alphabet, against the characters used in music, one might go on still further, and say that while some have from one to four *fangs*, others are *tadpole-shaped*, and therefore disgust by calling to mind loathsome reptiles ; some are bound together in little groups, showing a degree of social affinity ; others refuse all alliance whatever, and stand aloof from each other in wilful solitude ; and even if they had any kindred feeling, they are kept asunder by immovable *bars*. The faces of some are *white*, while those of others are *black* ; and these two classes are mingled together without distinction of color. Besides, some, in their pride, rear their heads above the lines assigned to the common classes, while others are depressed as far below the ordinary ranks of the social scale ; and it is not surprising that the children, on beholding such distinctions, express themselves in *high tones* of indignation at the arrogance of the former, and in *deep-toned* sympathy at the sufferings of the latter.

Now, how can a child, whose ear is charmed with sweet sounds, and in whose soul melody is seeking for utterance, turn with other than "death-like" feelings to such loathsome and revolting pictures, as salute his eyes in written music ? Would it not be the dictate of *kindness*, to endeavor to make the path of the learner more *easy* and *pleasant*, by allowing him to read whole measures, or whole tunes, before learning the notes of which they are composed ?



Another reason for making an exception to the general rule of teaching the elements first, is, that to teach whole words, is *agreeable* and *pleasant* to children.

It is evident that such considerations as those of making the path of the learner *pleasant* and *easy* have had great weight in the minds of the defenders of the new system. If, of two systems of teaching, equally good in other respects, the one has the additional recommendation of pleasing the child and the other has *not*, the former should by all means be chosen. But if a great principle is to be sacrificed simply to promote the child's pleasure, it becomes every practical teacher solemnly to protest. Nothing has been more productive of mischief, or more subversive of real happiness, than mistaking what may afford the child present gratification, for that which will secure for him lasting good.

It would seem that the child, in his ignorance and devotion to pleasure, is allowed to judge what is best, what is proper ; what, on the whole, will result in the greatest amount of good. "How," it is asked, "can one who as yet is utterly incapable of appreciating the remote benefits which, in after life, reward the acquisition of knowledge, derive any *pleasure* from an exercise which presents neither beauty to his eye, nor music to his ear, nor sense to his understanding ? And since the child cannot appreciate the remote benefits of learning the alphabet, must his caprice govern those who can, and determine them to abandon even for a time what they know is all-important in teaching him to read ? A child is sick, and cannot appreciate the remote benefits of taking disagreeable medicine. Will a judicious parent, who is

fully sensible of the child's danger, regard, for one moment, his wishes, merely to save him from a little temporary disquietude?

A child has no fondness for the dry and uninteresting tables of arithmetic. Shall he, therefore, be gratified in his desire to hasten on to the solution of questions, before acquiring such indispensable prerequisites?

We have been accustomed to suppose, that the responsibilities of the teacher's profession, consist mainly in his being required to fashion the manners and tastes of the pupils, to promote habits of thinking and patient toil, and to give direction to their desires and aspirations, rather than to minister to the gratification of a passion for pleasure. Let this point be distinctly understood. The teacher ought, when compatible with duty, to awaken in the child agreeable, rather than painful feelings. He, who delights in seeing a child in a state of grief, or, would add one *pang* to his sufferings in surmounting difficulties, is unfit for the teacher's office. On the other hand, he who would substitute *pleasure* for *duty*, or would seek to make that sweet, which is of itself bitter, and to make that smooth which is naturally and necessarily rough, is actuated by a misguided philanthropy. Hence, all attempts to make easy and simple, that which is already as easy and simple as the nature of the case will allow, serve to retard, rather than promote the progress of the child.

The grand mistake lies in the rank assigned to pleasure. To *gratify* the child should not be the teacher's aim, but rather to lay a permanent foundation, on which to rear a noble and well-proportioned superstructure. If

while doing *this* the teacher is successful in rendering mental *exertion* agreeable, and in leading the child from one conquest to another, till achievement itself affords delight, it is well ; such pleasure stimulates to greater exertion. But, if to cultivate pleasure-seeking is his aim, he had better at once abandon his profession, and obtain an employment in which he will not endanger the welfare of individuals and society, by sending forth a sickly race, palsied in every limb, through idleness and a vain attempt to gratify a morbid thirst for pleasure.

But even if the promotion of pleasure were the aim of the teacher, the new system of teaching reading is a most unfortunate mode of securing it. Pleasure springs from an active, rather than a passive state of the faculties.

The new system proposes to afford the child pleasure in the exercise of *reading words* ; yet, instead of requiring him to exert, in the least, his mental faculties, in combining the elementary parts of these words, the teacher gives merely the result of his own mental processes, and exacts nothing from the child but a passive reception of the sound, which is to be associated arbitrarily, with the *visible picture*, pointed out to him.

To this, the reply will probably be made, that the *idea*, not the mere act of passing from the visible to the audible sign, affords the pleasure. The pleasure arising from the *idea*, can be urged, with equal force, by both parties. Therefore, in determining to which of the two systems belongs the greater pleasure, no account whatever can be made of that which arises from the *meaning* of words. We submit the question to any candid mind, which system is adapted to afford the greater amount of pleasure ? We will now grant to the defenders of the

new system, for the sake of argument, all the advantage which they claim, from the association of interesting ideas, with the words which convey them. All that they can then mean, is, that the idea throws such a charm around those "bloodless and ghostly apparitions" which constitute words, that the "death-like" feeling with which the child would otherwise "face" them, is now converted into pleasure. According to the new plan of teaching, however, the familiar word is first pronounced to the child; the *idea* is then in the mind, as soon as he hears the word uttered. Having received the idea, and all the pleasure it can afford, does it seem reasonable to suppose he will interest himself much, with the "ill-favored" forms that represent it to the eye? There is a little nut enclosed in a prickly encasement. The nut itself is very agreeable to children; so agreeable as to induce them, at the expense of some pain, to try their skill in removing this unfriendly exterior. Repeated trials, with the stimulus afforded by a desire to gratify the taste, gives them skill; till at length, they can obtain the nut without much suffering. Now, suppose some "humane" person, desirous of aiding the child in *acquiring* this kind of skill, and of making his task, at the same time, more *pleasant*, should begin by removing the troublesome covering with his own hands, and suffer the child to surfeit himself, without any effort on his part. Would he, in the first place, secure the object of giving the child *skill*? and in the second place, will the child, having obtained the nuts, derive much pleasure from handling the vacant burrs? and, finally, does not pleasure itself become vitiated and morbid, when unattended with effort? This illustration will, at least, suggest the

foundation for the opinion, that the new system is the result of a misguided effort to make that pleasant, which, to some extent at least, must be disagreeable ; to make that easy, which, from the nature of the case, is beset with unavoidable difficulties.

But the principal argument for the new system, grows out of the disordered condition of the alphabet. Here, if anywhere, are the reasons for a change. It can be justly alleged, first, that in some instances, the same letter has two or more different sounds. Secondly, that the same sound may be represented by several different letters and combinations of letters ; and, thirdly, that some of the letters may become silent. These anomalies are the source of great perplexity to children, and are sensibly felt by the defenders of the ordinary method of teaching reading. It is one thing, however, to know the nature of a disease ; but quite a different thing to apply the proper remedy. If, in any instance, it can be said with truth that the remedy is worse than the disease, it is better to let the patient suffer on, and let the disease take its course, than resort to an unsafe prescription.

This brings us to the second general question proposed at the commencement of the lecture. Would such a change as that of teaching words before letters be an improvement upon the old method ?

The question now to be settled is, whether the imperfections of the alphabet, the only *real* cause for a change, afford *sufficient* reasons for the sacrifice of a great principle, and for such an entire revolution as the one proposed ?

Much that has been said on this subject can have no weight, because it results from confounding the *names* of letters with their powers.

Take the word *hat*, for instance. If we join the *names* of the letters which spell it, we have the nonsensical combination *aitchatee* ; if we join the *powers* of those letters, we have the spoken word *hat* ; if we join the *visible representatives* of those powers we have the printed symbol *hat*. Laying aside, then, all that has been said in defence of the system, arising from confounding the names of the letters with their powers, I proceed to the question, Shall the proposed change be made, because of the imperfections of the alphabet ?

Here, again, the negative is assumed for the following reasons.

1st. The alphabet with all its imperfections must, at some period, be taught.

If the new system could carry the child on through his studies, so as to escape entirely the perplexity arising from the imperfect condition of the alphabet, a strong inducement would be held out to adopt it universally. But when we reflect that the child must learn something like a thousand words as so many separate forms,\* just as he would learn the letters, and then must begin the alphabet, and learn that, with all its anomalies, it seems not too much to say, that his task is increased tenfold. I know it is said "that it always greatly facilitates an acquisition of the names of objects, or persons, to have been conversant with their forms and appearances beforehand." To this remark, the reply is obvious. If the learning of the alphabet consisted merely in associating the *names* of the letters with their *forms*, the task of learning it at *any* period would be but trifling. Even *then*, little advantage

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\* See Mr. Pierce's Lecture, vol. for 1843, page 162.



could be derived from the child's previous knowledge, his attention having been directed not to the forms of *letters*, but to the forms of *words*. But the great difficulty in mastering the alphabet arises from the necessity of associating with the same name and character, some two, three or more *powers* or elementary sounds ; and in attaching the same sound to some two, three or more different names and characters. In respect to these, which are the principal difficulties, the child's previous knowledge of words is of no service whatever. They are entirely new to him. It is therefore safe to say, that his task is increased tenfold.

There is another consideration in connection with this. Every practical teacher knows how difficult and unsatisfactory is the labor of making a child thoroughly acquainted with what he has once learned superficially.

The child has learned to utter the word *father* for example, as soon as he looks upon its form. How difficult must be the task of teaching him to rely upon the *powers* of its letters to make out the sound of it, when he can arrive at that sound in a shorter way. Thus it will be seen that the art of spelling must be endangered by this system. But it is said, that in learning words as whole objects, we must not offset twenty-six words against twenty-six letters ; for the child will be so interested with the meaning of words, that he will acquire them much more rapidly than he will the unmeaning "skeleton-shaped" and "bloodless" forms of the letters.

It is somewhat surprising, that the defenders of the new system do not see, when speaking of the alphabet as destitute of interest, that a striking analogy exists between the power of a letter and its visible symbol, on the one

hand, and the meaning of a word and its visible symbol, on the other. It is not strictly true that letters are destitute of meaning ; they represent sounds, as much as do the words, *buzz*, *hum*, *whistle*, *echo*, *thunder* ; and these elementary sounds ought to be associated with the *names* and *forms* of the letters, just as the meaning of words should be associated with the visible or audible sign which represents them. It may be said of a letter, with as much propriety as of a word, that it is "familiar to the *ear*, the *tongue*, and the *mind*," for the child has been accustomed to utter the elementary sounds of the language from the time he first begins to speak. The eye is unacquainted with the visible symbol. If, then, the child is interested with learning the printed forms of words on account of the idea which they represent, why may he not be interested with the forms of the letters on account of their powers ?

2. A second objection to the new system is, that it fails to accomplish the object which it proposes.

The main design of this mode of teaching seems to be, to escape the ambiguity and perplexity arising from the variety of sounds which attach to some of the letters, as well as from the variety of forms by which the same sound may be represented.

The defenders of the new system seem to forget that these anomalies are elementary, and must therefore be carried on into the formation of words ; and that words themselves must consequently become more anomalous and perplexing than *letters* even. A single sound may be represented by *a*, *ai*, and *ei* ; hence we can form the three words *vane*, *vain*, *vein*. The child must be taught to give the same sound to three different forms. Take,

again, the four different words pronounced *write*, and the child must attach the same sound to *four* distinct forms. The question arises, How much easier is it for a child to attach the same sound to four different pictures called words, than to four different pictures called letters? We have "harlequins" among words as well as among letters. The only difference is that the former are more numerous, yet the legitimate offspring of the latter. Now how much does the child gain by beginning with whole words? He is thrown into precisely the same difficulties that he would have met with by beginning with the alphabet, save that they are multiplied almost a hundred-fold, and the child knows not from what source they originate.

3. A third objection to the new system is, that, for a time, it converts a *phonetic* into a *symbolic* language.

All agree that the wonderful faculty of language is one of the Creator's best gifts to man. And well may that be called a wonderful faculty by which, through the agency of the vocal organs, we can so modify *mere sounds*, as to send them forth freighted with thoughts which may cause the hearts of others to thrill with ecstatic delight, or throb with unutterable anguish. And no wonder that there should have existed, early in the history of the world, a desire to enchain and represent to the eye these evanescent messengers of thought. Hence the early and rude attempts at writing, by means of pictures and symbols. But these, unfortunately, were representatives of the *message*, not the *messenger*; of the idea, not the sound which conveys it. At length arose that wonderful *invention*, the art of representing to the eye, by means of letters, the component parts of a *spoken word*, so that now, not merely the *errand*, but the *bearer*

stands pictured before us. The grand and distinctive feature of this invention is, that it establishes a connection between the *written* and *audible* signs of our ideas. It throws, as it were, a bridge across the otherwise impassable gulf which must ever have separated the one from the other. The hieroglyphics and symbols of the ancients, performed but one function. To those who, by a purely arbitrary association, were able to pass from the sign to the thing signified, they were representatives of ideas—and ideas *merely*; hence they are called ideographic characters, and that mode of writing has been denominated the *symbolic*, and is exemplified in the Chinese language.

On the other hand, words written with alphabetic characters perform two functions. Taken as whole pictures, they, like Chinese characters, represent ideas; but taken as composed of alphabetic elements which represent simple sounds, they conduct us directly to the audible sign which, in the case of common words, we have from childhood been accustomed to associate with the thing signified.

Owing to the last office which these words perform, namely, that of representing sounds, this mode of writing is called the *phonetic*. It has been said with truth, that “the art of writing, especially when reduced to simple phonetic alphabets, like ours, has, perhaps, done more than any other invention for the improvement of the human race.” If any one wishes still further to be convinced of the difference between the two, let him compare the figure 5, which is purely a symbol, with the written word *five*; the one gives no idea whatever of the *spoken word*, whereas the other conducts us directly to

it. Here the contrast is too striking to be misapprehended. A person might read Chinese without knowing a single sound of the language, simply because Chinese characters were never intended to represent sounds.

The new system of teaching reading, abandons entirely this distinctive feature of the phonetic mode of writing, and our words are treated as though they were capable of performing but one function, that of representing ideas. The language, although written with alphabetic characters, becomes, to all intents and purposes, a symbolic language. Now, as ours is designedly a phonetic language, no system of teaching that strips it of its principal power, ought to meet with public favor.

The defenders of the new system seem to lose sight of the nature and design of the alphabetic mode of writing, as an *invention*. To understand an invention, we must first know the law of nature which gave rise to it, and then the several parts of the invented system, as well as the adaptation of these parts, when combined, to accomplish some useful purpose. For instance, it was discovered a few years since, that a piece of iron exposed, under given circumstances, to a galvanic current, would become a powerful magnet, and that it would cease to be such, the instant the current was intercepted. Little was it then thought, that this simple discovery would give rise to an invention by which the winged lightning, fit messenger of thought, could be employed to enable the inhabitants of Maine to converse with their otherwise distant neighbors in Louisiana, with almost as much ease as though the parties were seated in the same parlor.

Now no one will pretend, that to make use of the magnetic telegraph successfully, the operator needs only

to gain an idea of it as *a whole*. The several parts, with their various relations and combinations, must be understood. He must be familiar with the laws of electricity, and the several parts of the machine, to accomplish, by means of that agent, the object proposed. But who would think of interpreting the results of its operation, the dots, the lines, the spaces, by looking upon them as constituting a single picture?

To apply this illustration. It was discovered, ages ago, that Nature had endowed the organs of speech with the power of uttering a limited number of simple sounds. From this discovery originated the invention of letters to represent these elementary sounds to the eye.

Letters constitute the *machinery* of the invention; they are the *tools* by which the art of reading is to be acquired, and a thorough knowledge of letters, bears the same relation to reading, as does a thorough acquaintance with the parts of a magnetic telegraph to a skilful use of that machine.

The new system proposes to abandon, for a *time* at least, all that is peculiar to this invention; all that distinguishes it from the rude and unphilosophical systems of symbolic writing which, centuries ago, gave place to it, throughout every portion of the civilized world.

A fourth objection to this system is, that teaching words to any extent whatever, can afford the child little or no facility for learning new ones. Every new word must be taken at the dictation of the teacher, till the alphabet is acquired. The principal difficulty in learning the written language of the Chinese—a difficulty which renders it vastly more formidable to foreigners than the wall along their northern frontiers,—is the fact, that each



of their 10,000 characters is to be learned independently of the others. There is no common link that enables the learner to pass from one to another, as in a phonetic language. When the learner has acquired a hundred, he must learn the hundred and first character, as a separate form, unaided by his previous acquirement. Now, since by the new system our language is bereft of its phonetic character, the child is placed at the same disadvantage in learning our words, with the exception that our words are far more difficult than the Chinese, because they are so long and cumbersome.

A fifth objection to converting our language into Chinese, arises from the *change* which must inevitably take place in the modes of associating the printed word with the idea which it represents, when the child is taught to regard words as composed of elements. Children, at first, by the new method learn to recognize the word as a single picture, not as composed of parts ; and for aught we know, they begin in the middle of some of our long words and examine each way. It is not at all probable, that they proceed invariably from left to right, as in the usual mode. However that may be, an entire change must take place when they begin to learn words as composed of letters. The attention then is directed to the parts of which words are composed. While the eye is employed in combining the visible characters, the mind unites the powers which they represent, and the organs of speech are prompt to execute what the eye and the mind have simultaneously prepared for them. The mode of association in a symbolic language seems to be this : The single picture is associated arbitrarily, yet directly, with the *idea* ; the *idea* is then associated with its audible

sign; this sign, being familiar to the child, is readily uttered. In a phonetic language it is different.

The attention being directed to the letters and their powers, the child is conducted immediately to the audible sign; this when uttered, or thought of, suggests the idea. Whether or not this is the true analysis of the modes of association in either case, is immaterial to the argument. All that is claimed, is that a *change* takes place as soon as the child begins to combine letters into words. It is of this *change* that the complaint is made. All will acknowledge the importance of forming in the child correct habits of association, such as will not need revolutionizing at a subsequent period in life. All know with what tenacity children cling to first impressions. Pity it is, that such impressions should be made, as will require an entire change at some subsequent period.

6. The new plan of teaching must prove detrimental to spelling. If, as was affirmed in the lecture of last year, "It is no part of the plan to teach spelling and reading *together*, but first one and then the other," if "The object is to teach him [the child] to read and then to spell," the important branch of spelling, as it seems to me, must suffer by the experiment. The danger consists in disconnecting spelling and reading,—in making the latter independent of the former. The whole word is at first treated as an element. Spelling is thus the act of decomposing what is already learned, rather than that of combining into a compound, previously acquired elements. The child does not depend upon a knowledge of the alphabet to acquire the pronunciation of the word, but having learned this by an arbitrary association, he is subsequently taught to separate the word into its several

parts. Spelling is thus treated as a separate or incidental exercise, and not as a necessary antecedent to reading, precisely in the same manner, as if the theorems in the first Book of Euclid were first to be learned, and afterwards, as a disconnected lesson, the definitions and axioms. The letters are thus regarded as so many "marks," rather than as so many representatives of sounds.

Now a child having acquired some facility in reading by the new plan, would naturally regard spelling as an irksome task; and would not feel the necessity of learning it, as he would if reading were made to depend upon a knowledge of spelling.

For such reasons, it seems to me obvious, that the method of teaching words before letters would tend to depreciate an already too much neglected branch.

7. As a final objection to this method of teaching, let it be remarked, that it cherishes and perpetuates a defective enunciation.

Children so universally come to the school-room, especially from uneducated families, with habits of incorrect articulation, that the efforts of the teacher, at an early period, should be directed toward the correction of these habits. The only sure way to accomplish this, is to drill the pupils on the elementary sounds of the language.

The errors in enunciation consist, chiefly, in giving either an incorrect sound to, in suppressing, or in mingling the vocal elements. A forcible enunciation of these elements, separately, will direct the attention of the child to, and correct, those which are uttered improperly; will bring out those which have been omitted, or too feebly expressed; and will tend to keep separate those, which, from early habit, have been blended together. Reading

may be divided into two departments, which may be called the *mechanical* and the *intellectual*. The latter embraces all the higher excellences of reading ; such as *emphasis, inflection, pauses*, and what is comprehended in the general term *expression*.

To prepare the pupil for this department of reading, it is of the highest importance, that all which is embraced in the former, should first be carefully taught. In this discussion, we are concerned especially with the mechanical part of reading. It includes two particulars ; first, a skilful use of the *tools* employed in the art, that is, the ability of uttering with fluency the *sounds* of words, while the eye passes rapidly over the letters which represent them ; and, secondly, such a thorough training of the organs of speech as will enable the pupil to utter those sounds with clearness and force.

By the new system, neither of these particulars can to any great extent, be attended to ; for they both involve a knowledge of the elements. To be able to utter the elements forcibly, when taken either separately, or combined, is not unlike the acquirement of skill on an instrument of music. That a performer can pass over rapid and difficult passages with ease and gracefulness, is the surest proof that he has been thoroughly drilled, on every *note* of those passages. He did not acquire them all in a mass, as a *whole* ; and that by some fortunate movement of the fingers which cost him no effort. Such skill must have been the result of patient toil, which was but gradually rewarded with success. What if one desiring to become a skilful player upon the piano-forte, yet impatient to play a tune, because more *agreeable*, should, at first, omit the lessons for practice, and place the fin-

gers upon the keys, regardless of order, or the rules contained in the "Book of Instructions?" The bad habits, thus acquired, might last him through life, and ever prove an obstacle to his success. But what would be thought of a professor of music, who should allow of such a disorderly beginning? *Still more*, of one who should recommend it, and affirm that no thorough reform could be effected without it? A defect in the enunciation of the elements, is a radical one, and the new system is directly calculated to perpetuate it. If there were no other argument against the system, this, of itself, would be sufficient to show its utter futility.

Such are the reasons, that are urged against the adoption of the new system.

At best, it stands as an exception to a rule of universal application.

The arguments in favor of this exception, seem to me inconclusive. Some are irrelevant, others fallacious, and others still are based upon false premises. On the contrary, the arguments urged by the friends of the old system, go to show, that though the alphabet is imperfect, it is better to teach it at the outset, than to teach it at great disadvantage, at a later stage of the child's progress, and thus subject him to all the loss which must ensue from a neglect of the letters.

It is therefore hoped, that our schools will not be made to suffer by the adoption of such a system.





## LECTURE IX.

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### \*THE DUTY

OF THE

## AMERICAN TEACHER.

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BY JOHN N. BELLOWS.

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I HAVE thought I could not occupy the hour allotted me upon this occasion, more profitably than with some remarks upon the Duty of the American Teacher. My subject involves his position with regard to other professions and to society ; the obstacles that lie in his way from without and within ; his encouragements, and hopes, and station.

I shall not, in what I have to say, pretend to method

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\* This lecture was delivered before the American Institute of Instruction at Providence, in August, 1840 ; and should have appeared in the volume for that year. The omission,—the Censors have lately discovered,—was owing merely to the failure of the author to receive their letter requesting a copy for publication. It therefore seems proper to give his lecture a place in the present volume.

or rhetorical completeness. These are quite subordinate objects. And besides, the worker who utters himself directly,—any man, in any art or trade, who in a right spirit, aims to tell what he has heard or felt,—will be likely to fall into a method best suited to himself, whether it agree with rules or not. I am not here to speak eloquently, even if I could, nor have I any other design than good service to the cause in which I am engaged. If I succeed in arresting your attention and exciting your interest, it is the property of truth to do this, and not of any particular speaker. Every thing true or useful has more or less beauty and interest. There is a grace that adorns all good thoughts ; a proportion and dignity about all noble and honorable deeds. The person who works with his heart as well as his head,—who enlists his feelings in the work of teaching young and growing minds, can hardly help conceiving noble thoughts, when he considers the results that belong to his labors. I may speak from experience in this matter, and say, that if ever, in the years that I have lived, I have felt my heart beat with aspirations for the good of others ; if I have ever been carried out of myself, and felt ennobled and raised and dignified in my mind, it has been when the world saw me only the slave of a dull routine of vexatious duties ; when I have gone regularly to school and patiently performed my task, in leading the young minds about me.

As little does the mind sympathize with the joys as with the trials of the Teacher. His duties are arduous, it is true, but they have their reward. In most operations, the eye of the world is placed upon results. Go to a manufacturing town, and you see wealth in its great factories ; you hear the sound of dollars in its noisy

water-wheels ; and, as the bales of rich goods pass by you, you are struck with astonishment at the contrivances of human ingenuity and industry. Pass into these same factories, and you will find men engaged in apparently dull and tedious processes, which, to your eye, bear no relation whatever to the results you have just seen with so much astonishment. The results and effects of the Teacher's labors are never, or rarely, seen in connection with himself. By the time the mind he has helped to form has got into busy life, and is taking an active part in the operations of the world, his share of the credit is quite forgotten, or the voice that would speak it is unheeded, amid the brazen-throated trumpets and the noise of indiscriminate praise. But however the world may regard him, not unsupported is he by a sense of the importance of his vocation. The neat, small school-house, cannot compare with the large, noisy factory, in size and bustle ; the tender, delicate mechanism of the human soul cannot be seen so obviously as the ponderous wheels and hammers of the mill ; but while the latter turns out cloths and products which at best answer but a temporary use, and finally perish and are forgotten, the little modest school-house turns out minds which move the great machinery of society ; produce or quell revolutions ; free or enslave a country ; commit great crimes, or deeds of heroic virtue. Here are formed the poet, the sage, the orator ; one to charm the world with his numbers, another to enlighten it with his wisdom, and the last to move multitudes, as the winds bend with resistless force the stately trees of the forest. It may have done in times past to talk of the gift of genius, and to use such phrases as *natural talent*, wonderful gift for this or that art, trade or

profession ; but the Teacher, familiar with his business, sees the best gift in a fine physical frame, where all the senses are perfect and the health is uncorrupted, in his own best exertions, and the sympathy and assistance of the parent of his pupil. These last are gifts which produce men to honor an age, and send out scholars, and Christians and philanthropists. The education of circumstances, the teachings of nature, often produce men of noble character, whom some great crisis summons out from their seclusion to surprise and delight the world ; and because they have not gone through the usual routine of school and college, they are objects of wonder, and are said to have no education. As this good, accidental education is rare, so these men are rare. But education they have had ; and while one comes up in this meteor-like way to his place of command and usefulness, hundreds, nay thousands, are "frozen" in "the genial current of their souls."

"Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid  
A heart once pregnant with celestial fire ;  
Hands, that the rod of empire might have swayed,  
Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre."

Call not then the occupation of the Teacher dull and uninteresting, while he may look at such results. Pity him not, because he is not amassing wealth or gaining the newspaper notoriety of the politician ; because his name is not associated with railroads, canals, and public loans. He is in truth associated with all these, and may claim at least a New England cousinship with those who received from him, though years ago, the impulse and discipline by which they are so conspicuous in the service of their country.

To weave a theory upon the subject of Education, to mark out a plan, new and plausible, and not grossly inconsistent in its parts, is not a very difficult, nor a very unusual thing. For the Teacher himself to come out and say what he believes and thinks and feels, simply, directly and honestly, is far more unusual ; and it would seem far easier too. The great obstacle in the way of all Teachers is, that the world has got its ideas upon the subject of Education from philosophers, statesmen and divines. It has always struck me as a gross inconsistency, to suppose that those persons are best qualified to direct and plan schemes of education, who know nothing of it practically ; and who, it is taken for granted, must know best what is for the good of the young and the good of the Teacher, because they excel in some branch of art, or are elevated to some particular station. We may as well undertake to learn agriculture from sailors, and navigation from farmers, as to hope for much light upon this subject from those who consider children as so many little figures, to be moved about at will by the arbitrary machinery they contrive, like the parts in Maelzel's celebrated exhibition of the burning of Moscow. The science of education has been based upon conjecture and reasoning from hypothesis, rather than from fact and experience. We want facts upon the subject of education. We have quite enough, perhaps too much, of theory and speculation. We are too far out of sight of land, in a sea of metaphysics and theory. Philosophers and philanthropists have seen and felt the want of the world, and have endeavored to do what they could. They have tried to answer the great questions which the wants of society are now asking ; as, How shall light be sent out to reach the

dark places ? How can intelligence and thought be universal ? They have assumed the facts they had not ; and, of course, however imposing may seem their views, they can do, except by chance, little good. From the general ignorance upon this subject, all have thought they could safely say something about it ; if wrong, hoping to escape in the dark ; and if right, so much the better. All persons who would not be deemed insensible, have paid the topic of teaching the passing compliment of respect and good wishes ; but the practical teacher, the man or woman who has been in the toil and sweat of the day, the sailor himself who has coasted about this comparatively unknown region the young mind ; who has found shallows when he looked for deep water, and deep water, when he looked for rocks ; who has found no hold for his anchors when the tempest caught him on a lee-shore ; and again has been saved from shipwreck often when ready to despair, by the springing up of favorable winds, or the gleaming of a light just seen on the verge of the horizon ; he alone can furnish these facts, and from him alone must come the foundation of all schemes of education.

Facts are as essential in a theory of education as in a system of astronomy. The statesman and philosopher may tell us well and truly of the effects of education ; they can deal familiarly with kingdoms, governments, and races of men, and may reason justly from the great principles of human nature and the human mind. But to form this mind ; to know it in its embryo state ; to follow it into its little corners ; to watch its fermentation, and direct its newly developed powers and energies,—this is the business, the duty, the privilege of the Teacher himself ; and is it asked, where is the obstacle ? The Teacher



is bewildered among contradictions, overwhelmed with school-books, and when theories and systems are so abundant, that almost every parent may have one entirely to himself, he is puzzled how to apply his own system, which he has learned by practice, and which indeed is the only one he can apply to any purpose, without giving offence and creating doubts of his judgment and competency for his task. From the vagueness and uncertainty which clouds the public mind, the door is open for all kinds of quackery and imposition. Assertion must be taken where there is no certainty, and if one pretends to teach a language in twelve lessons, or a fine handwriting in half that number, it is hard to bring a refutation which shall outweigh the flaming advertisements at every corner. If it be said, that the same thing is true in all the professions, it must also be recollected that the injury in the one case is by far greater than in any other; for the minds of children resemble certain elementary substances, which, if once combined, can never be restored fully to their former state; while mistaken confidence in one's lawyer, minister, or physician, may be rectified by a slight loss of money and a small exercise of patience. We say therefore, that one great obstacle to Teachers is the uncertainty of the public mind as to what is Education, and how it is to be affected—an uncertainty and vagueness consequent upon so much having been said upon the subject without fact or foundation.

In this convocation of Teachers, I shall not make myself obnoxious to the charge of disrespect to any, by saying, that the teacher has not been the master but the servant. He has been the drudge of his calling, and not the leader and guide. He has, instead of sailing his

craft by the stars, taken his observations from the lands and the lighthouses. School-committee men and Boards of Trustees have aided him so much, that, if he ever had a sense of independence and self-reliance, he has lost it, and the muscles which should have acquired strength by action to support him, have, for want of use, become flabby and weak, so that he can hardly stand alone. In the very outset of his labors, the poor teacher has been subjected to examinations where severity and tricky questions have been resorted to, to hide ignorance. Those appointed to this place in the towns of our country, have often been chosen for other reasons than proficiency in learning. Imposing Boards of Trustees, too, sit in bewilderment to hear the language of science, and pass flats of approval or disapproval without knowing what they do. To satisfy the public mind, these boards of examination, or trusteeships, often wink at the grossest impositions as to the real character of the school, in allowing examinations to pass for genuine which are, in truth, the work of preparation, and consequently no test at all. The teacher, finding he cannot rely upon the real work he does, but upon untruth, insincerity and stratagem, to support his reputation, becomes often the fit tool of such supervisors, and loses first his self-respect and then his virtue, and finally every thing. Hence we have no facts from the proper sources, and hence it is that, go where you will, in this land where intelligence is the root of our existence, and you will find, with a few favored exceptions, the universal complaint that we have no good schools. Money enough has been expended in this country to make us all Newtons and Herschels, but the men to do this work have been wanting. We have but few teachers, and consequently, I say again, we have few facts.

I might here utter common-places about the value of education, and perhaps suggest a theory of my own, and escape censure, if I gained not praise ; but I am not content to let the occasion pass thus. If I speak at all, I must be permitted to utter the statements of my heart, even if they be sentiments of indignation. And about what ? Indignation that so much is said and so little done. Indignation at the verbose compliments paid to teachers as a body, upon all great occasions, when, from a sense of duty or for rhetorical effect, they are lauded to the skies, and the crushing neglect they actually meet. Indignation at the ridicule hitherto heaped upon the pedagogue. Indignation that we in this country practically avow the principle, that if a man (or woman) can do nothing else, beyond mere manual labor, he (or she) can at least keep a school. Indignation that the teacher is expected to revolve, as a small satellite, about the orbit of the church, or be a kind of drum-major to a sect, and hang upon the skirts of the people who pay him his salary. I speak not now of teachers in Boston and many other favored regions, but of the American teacher all over our country, as I have seen and known him ; and I say, no such class or profession is widely recognized or thought of ; and, say what we please, and harangue as we please about our common-school system and high-school system, about privileges and advantages and free institutions,—it is all sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal, so long as place and emolument and character are not stamped as deeply and indelibly upon the very worker and mover and actor in these affairs, the teacher himself, as upon the coin of our mint. Cast your eyes, for a moment, upon the embodiment of learning and in-

telligence placed before your children. Do they see a figure crowned with grace and health, radiant of happiness, full of kindliness of heart, and smiling upon them to entice their feet? Far from it; learning, to most children, is associated with a wasted, anxious countenance, and a frown of authority. The literature of the times, and the pictures in the annuals, and even in higher places, where they ought to know better, represent the teacher as old and infirm, as ungraceful and simple, as ignorant of the world, and the butt of tricks and childish frolic. Said an Italian painter to me the other day: In my country, in the teacher we expect something divine; but in your country it is not so. Here people say, as a reason for patronizing an individual, "Mr. A. is a poor man,—has a family,—we will help him; but in Italy, if we seek a teacher, we try to find one capable of instructing; and if we wish to help a poor man, we give him money."

The first duty of the American teacher seems to me to be, to rise to a sense of the dignity of the place he occupies, and to throw forcibly aside the prejudices that attach to his occupation. Let him not be bold, but confident; not unyielding, but self-relying. He must not believe that he is shut out from the honors, that he has nothing to do with the great operations of the world. He must not believe that what he is doing is of little consequence because it does not cause a revolution, subvert or establish an empire. Let him rather feel that he is a citizen of a republic whose foundation stones, if it has any, are laid in the intelligence of the people; that without his efforts all other means for human liberty must inevitably fail; that knowledge is power, for nations as for individuals; that republics are no political accident, but will, from time to

time, appear in the world, when the human mind gains a certain dignity from events and religion and learning, and will last so long as these continue to act upon it, and no longer.

The American Teacher is so far different from the teacher of any other country, as upon him mainly depends the success of the experiment of human liberty. Let him feel this, and believe it, and act upon it, and there will be no lack of heart in his employment. This sense of a high object will throw a halo of pure light and joy about the most common and tedious occupation, and as he toils on from day to day in the same routine of duty, he will be visited by gleams of satisfaction and hours of intense delight. Mysteriously, if you please, divinely, unsought, will come to him peace and an elevated consciousness of his usefulness. It will be honor enough for him to labor unseen about the basement of the temple his country is erecting, while others are more conspicuously employed upon the dome and pillars and cornices ; but not with more pious hands, or more devoted hearts.

The duty of this view and feeling is not advocated in a selfish spirit. In a growing country like our own, where places of profit and honor are always open to the gifted and aspiring, where the bar, the pulpit and the halls of medicine invite the studious and the educated, few will turn aside from the inducements of such professions to follow in the apparently rugged and toilsome path of the Teacher, unless this profession can claim honestly a title to attention from the world. But when this shall be the case ; when the teacher is no longer the pedant and dependant, but the scholar, and the master of his calling, then will the business of teaching call oftener than now into its ranks the talented, the spirited and vigorous minds

of the country. Once having gained, by its own intrinsic deserts, this elevated rank in public estimation, which now it only holds by props and special effort, it will ever keep it.

Unfortunately, the teacher of the present day is regarded by the parent of his pupils with much the same eyes with which, as a boy, that parent looked upon the tyrant of his own childhood. In recollecting his own school-days, it does not occur to him, that school-rooms have changed in their character almost more than any thing else. And indeed it is not difficult to account for the disposition to attach certain singular characteristics to the schoolmaster. The general ignorance in regard to some things that he taught, or professed to teach ; the pedantic age in which he lived, when a little learning was a wonderful thing ; the undue importance attached to his opinions as one possessing the keys of a mysterious knowledge ; his tyrannical authority and birch-enforced power, —all these gave to the schoolmaster, half a century ago, a peculiar expression, and attached to his vocation a kind of mock respect, from which the teacher of the present day not entirely escapes.

Yet, as a class, we are gradually working out of this ridiculous position ; and it will be a happy day for teacher and pupil, when the former shall be regarded as not infallible, and when deference shall be shown to the man, the friend, the guide and counsellor and fellow learner, and not to the ghost of an authority, which, we fear, has crushed many a tender spirit, and exalted many a learned blockhead into an importance he was by no means fitted to wield. We enjoin, then, upon the teacher to throw aside, as worse than useless, this customary claim upon



the deference of his pupils and others, and to rely upon a higher claim, which every man has, in the faithful discharge of an important trust. And we rely upon this view of the matter as one of great importance to the teacher and the public, as tending to call into our ranks those who now think there is no proper sphere for a gentleman and scholar out of what are called the learned professions, and so to furnish to the cause laborers not a little needed.

Who, we ask, is the American teacher now? Who is it that is leading the youthful mind among the hills of New England, in the valleys of the west, and along the plains of the south? Who is the man now forming our future voters and governors and judges,—those who are to decide the destiny of our dear country? Is he a man trained to his profession by study or even practice? Is he an intellectual man, with refined tastes of any kind and degree? We fear not. He is probably a young man of indifferent health, who is anxious to escape the stigma, as he considers it, of being a mechanic or farmer. Heaven help him! He wants a profession. He keeps school for his own improvement. This scheme of schoolmaster-ship is a kind of first step in his own education. By and by, he will begin the study of law, or medicine, or divinity; and this may be very well for him, but the parents who employ him ought to know better. And if any one wonders why that most excellent periodical, called the Common School Journal, is not more widely read and practiced upon, he may more reasonably first wonder at the insensibility and short-sightedness of the people in entrusting their children to cheap and uneducated teachers. The demand always creates the article; but we fear it

will be a long time before parents in this country will have learned to discriminate; before they will be willing to give their children fortunes in the form of an expensive and generous education, and not in bank stock and houses and lands, which may be abused and squandered. One can hardly be extravagant in statements upon this point, and however often such things have been said before, they must be said again and again. The people of this country do not know how much they enjoy. Let a picture be drawn of the advantages of an American youth, born under a free sky, within the sound of Sabbath bells, and within sight of the public school, with public friends and private friends,—take the instance from what rank you please—and let this picture be presented in the cottage or hovel of the English factory worker, in the cabin of the Irish, and still more in the heathen hut, and it would be listened to as a highly wrought fiction of the imagination, too happy and too blessed to be true.

And now, after these general remarks, I come to some facts and impressions in my own experience ;—throwing them out as an humble contribution to the common stock. Joined to other facts and impressions, they may create light. We do not enough consider how valuable our experience may be to others as well as to ourselves.

I may state, then, in the first place, that I do not believe the young are to be taught so much by books as is generally supposed. I have no confidence in the intellectual progress of a pupil who gets his lesson, word for word, and is orderly and still and methodical, more from want of life than from duty. The minds of the young ask something more from their teachers than to see that they recite lessons correctly. Indeed they will

rarely know any subject well, until it has come to them with life and voice and expression from the teacher himself, and not from the printed page. It is doubted by many whether books should ever be used at recitation, and especially with the younger pupils. Instead of thinking of the subject, they will be thinking of the book, of the thousand little associations they have unconsciously resorted to in getting the lesson ; as on which side of the page, how far down,—capitals, italics, &c. Some will rely upon their musical ear, to catch the inflections, and some will have rules written on their fingers ; and indeed, seldom is a school-boy found to have a *whole* in his mind, as he describes a *part*. To understand any part well, the pupil needs to see the whole of a subject at once ; and the teacher must have the power of showing these sights. Complete outlines must be drawn, and then must come the filling up of the parts, whose relations can be seen as the work is advancing. The pupil must be made to realize that grammar, arithmetic—whatever be the subject taught—has an existence independent of books. He must, first of all, I will say, have his mind cleared of that idea which seems to be universal with the young, and not uncommon even with their elders, that science and learning are things that were invented by some very learned men, who lived a long time ago. Now, by addressing a young, clear mind in common language, not giving him to understand that you are doing a very difficult thing, whether upon language, mathematics, or the natural sciences, you may teach him a great deal almost before he feels aware of it. But give him a large hard-looking book, full of technical expressions, and he will be thinking of the difficulties in his way, finding expedients

to get off, until his mind is confused, and, whenever the subject is mentioned, there comes over him a current of misty associations that perplex and disgust him with all study.

I know that the teacher, who has the confidence of the pupil, may say, "Go on. By and by, you will see the object of this; the light will break upon you presently; believe me, this is the way;" and so make his own task easier, for the time. But this is not making study pleasant. It is asking too much of your pupil. It supposes him to have self-discipline, faith and perseverance,—qualities which it is the very object of education to give him. And besides, when one pupil will consent to do this, nine hundred and ninety-nine will refuse; and, this relying upon books to teach, explains to me the prevailing ignorance upon some of the simplest subjects of knowledge. The pupil must know at what point he is aiming. He will not consent to go in the dark. If book be used at all, it must be the page of the blackboard, where the book is written step by step. With this and the voice you must chain his attention. He will forget himself and his sports and plays; and now, while his eye is open, and he is fastened to the subject, you may keep him there and give him clear notions and fundamental instruction, which will, by and by, make his books delightful to him. It is no slight acquisition to learn to read, even mechanically; but to read and fully understand,—to receive clear ideas from a printed page,—is what few are able to do without very long practice.

Books are useful only in a certain way, after much has been learned,—to refresh the mind,—a kind of review. Who learns poetry from books? True, there it is read,

but first it is learned from nature,—from mountain, sea, and wood ;—from the tempests without and the struggles within our own hearts ; from the calm of evening, and the quiet of domestic peace. The book but tells us what we know already.

But whatever may be said for or against lesson-getting, of the fact I am certain, that in no other way than the one I allude to, have I ever been successful in teaching Grammar and Arithmetic. It is not uncommon to find pupils in our schools who have been over the English Grammar half a dozen times, reciting it by the answers to questions printed in the book. Question such pupils—vary the language of the book at all—and they are lost ; change even the arrangement, and they are bewildered. The same may be said of Arithmetic, learned by arbitrary rules.

That tax upon the public, and which is so severely felt by the poor—I mean the school-book tax—would never be suffered, if we were right upon this point. But after all, the whole thing depends upon having educated teachers. Books are now expected to do the work which the teacher himself should do. But they cannot do it ; they never can be made to do it. Parents, in this way, have to pay for not having educated teachers. But the worst of it is, that they pay and get nothing. Better would it be to pay the teacher and not buy the book. Some way indeed must be contrived to protect the poor and ignorant, (for the burden falls upon them,) from the shocking impositions practised upon them in the form of some new and complete system of English Grammar or Arithmetic.

I see no way in which a system of public instruction is to be carried out upon any other principle. Our public

schools may keep boys out of mischief, and drill them in certain habits of order ; may teach them to read and write, to keep accounts, &c. ; but is this all that we are aiming at when we talk of the education of the laboring classes, the elevation of our national character ?

Let there be a hall large enough to contain five hundred pupils ; let it be a commodious building, and not a barn ; let it be such a place that the pupil, as he enters it, shall feel he is at the threshold of a temple, and not at a prison door ;—the mind, impressed with reverence, will need no government, but will be a law unto itself. Here, in such a place, shall such a teacher as we would have, (and the lower the grade of mind he addresses, the higher must be his power and faith,) impart to these five hundred pupils some elemental knowledge. Let it be a whole, and let him give the subject the grace and interest which all elemental knowledge has, far higher in degree than is generally imagined, and they will learn and have something in their minds ; they will have been lifted up ; while from books they might have lists of words in the memory, and on the tongue, and that is all.

I believe the pulpit, and our lecture rooms, are doing far more for intellectual progress than our school-houses ; and the reason is, that there the teacher seems to be in earnest, and to have something to say, while the school house is a terror, a prison for unruly children who trouble their parents at home. Our country is full of intelligent men and women who are seeking knowledge,—elementary knowledge. They have got into life, and now that they understand things, they begin to ask for principles, classification and order. They have learned little at school besides to read and write ; the principles of mechan-



ics, the laws of fluids, the names given to the elements of the very air they breathe, sound like learned jargon to their ears ; and yet a system of natural philosophy, and especially those parts which relate to health and comfort, might be taught in our common schools ; and these principles are far more easily understood than English Grammar or Arithmetic. But the young and untutored mind cannot learn these principles from books. They must be shown him by actual experiment, and he must see and handle the instruments himself. And the teacher for this mind must have the living knowledge himself, and not know it only from a book ; he must feel it, and utter it with plainness and an earnest simplicity.

How much ought we to doubt the power of books to teach, when we see such expedients used to avoid them ; so little progress ; and the eagerness with which the boy let loose from school turns to *things*, seeking his discipline and education in the invention of machines, water-works, and mimic mills. In each and all is the habit of thought going on, and the future man arming himself, when seemingly only subserving an idle pastime, for actual life, and scenes of importance to mankind. During my own school days, I sat in the same form with a lad of nearly my own age, who found it tedious to conform to the arbitrary regulations of our school. While the Greek or Latin book was before him, his mind was engaged in dreams of art, and his heart was in the little studio near his father's cottage, where were arranged busts and statues, pictures and medals. When the hour of dismissal came, how eagerly would he hurry to this sacred retreat, and, neglecting the usual sports of boyhood, labor at his favor-

ite pursuits. A boyish friendship made me his companion. Often while he wrought and chiseled and made casts, anon, with beaming eye and animated gesture, he discoursed of Michael Angelo, and called to mind the struggles, perseverance, and success of distinguished artists. We entered college together. His study was soon converted into a workshop, and, while I was digging at Greek roots and mathematics, I could hear through the partition the sound of his chisel. He went to recitation, passed the usual term of time at college, but made no pretension to verbal scholarship. He felt he had within him a sacred taste, which he was unwilling to tarnish with other interests. His real education was going on in that little workshop, while his college bills were paid for Latin and Greek. He was self-taught in the noble art of the sculptor. His name is now associated with the greatest name of the world—our Washington.

But I pass from this topic. There are two other points which I shall briefly notice, and leave for the consideration of this meeting.

One is the injury our common schools receive, our system of public instruction, by the private establishments for education ; and the other is the injustice of the rate of tuition in schools.

As to the first, it is almost hopeless to undertake to elevate the public schools, when the children of the cultivated, those pupils whose home education is often felt to be so valuable among their fellows, are separated off into a higher and more select circle by themselves ; and when boys throw it at each other as a stigma, that they receive their education by charity. If there is

any anti-republican influence in this country, it is undoubtedly this. A feeling of natural superiority is thus bred in the bone, and it is hard to escape from this feeling ever after. It takes away the ambition of the poor boy. It causes him to blush for his parentage ; it excites bitter feelings of envy, and often despair. If, in this country, there is any hostility between those who are in refined and fortunate circumstances, and those who are poor and unlettered and unfortunate ; between those who are in favor of strict laws to protect them where they are, and those who are disposed for too much liberty, that they may escape from where they are ; its origin may easily be traced back to feeling implanted in the minds of some, that they are too good to go to the public school, and in the minds of others, that they are objects of public charity. If the rich and intelligent and refined would patronize our public schools, and give the deep interest they show in education to the cause of public instruction, one could hardly be extravagant in his hopes for American character on this ground.

As to the other point, having barely hinted at which I will relieve your patience, I believe that the usual custom of charging \$10, \$15, and \$20, for tuition in the higher branches, meaning the languages, the sciences, and the mathematics, and only half that amount for the lower branches, meaning English Grammar, Arithmetic, Reading, &c., is irrational, and shows how narrow and unphilosophical are our views of education. In the first place the labor is greater ; the responsibility deeper in the latter case. The very young are those who ask the most care. He who is just beginning to learn to walk, needs frequent support, while the practised pedestrian only requires now

and then a gesture of the hand, pointing the way, which he travels with experienced step. I am aware that the teacher often gives his chief attention to those studies in which he himself feels the deepest interest. He spends hours upon Latin and the sciences, while the little boys and girls are occasionally called up to read and spell, to show their slates, and perhaps get a cuff or two to help them up the steep hill of science. It is the general neglect of these minor classes which makes school so irksome to little boys and girls. These young pupils, during most of the school hours, try every expedient to kill time. They catch flies, make faces, (and cut up all manner of antics,) preferring even a sound whipping to the dull monotony of sitting still and doing nothing. Call to mind your own school days, and you will be able to sympathize with these little prisoners of knowledge. Recollect how you were accustomed to watch the sun's shadows on the wall, to listen for the bells of the baker, or any sound that betokened the flight of time.

The present system of tuition cannot well be changed at once ; but it is suggested to be considered, whether that which requires the greater labor and skill, ought not to receive the higher pecuniary reward. No such change can be made, it may be said, without a thorough reform in the whole system of education. And if we adopt the maxim lately uttered by a celebrated Englishman, that the child's destiny is fixed at the age of seven, or something to that effect ; meaning to say, at any rate, that the early, infant training is *the* important training, how entirely will this system be reversed !

It may also be said, that the expense of a college education, so necessary to enable the instructor to teach the high-

er branches, furnishes a reason for the present system of tuition. And there is reason in this, could we allow the young to be committed to the ignorant. But if thorough and highly educated teachers are required for any class, it is for the *very* young. I assert with confidence, that it requires more mind and knowledge to answer the questions of a young child satisfactorily, more judgment to know what to choose for his information, than to discourse learnedly and interestingly upon the subjects that employ men. Little children often see very deeply into matters that would seem above their comprehension ; and it is only because they look directly, and without prejudice, at most subjects that excite their interest. If uneducated men must teach, let them take the advanced, the sturdy, the already well-disciplined ; but suffer not such to tamper with the ardent curiosity of a young mind ; which like the tender shoot of the vine, yields to the breathing of the lightest zephyr ; but which, like the same vine, after it has become the stock of new shoots, is able to withstand the tempest and the storm.

I may say again, in conclusion, that in making these statements and suggestions, and throwing out these thoughts and feelings, I have not asked myself, if they conform to the usual train of remark upon occasions like the present ; if they are sufficiently formal and precise,—neither likely to offend, nor to be commended: my only objects have been, sincerity to myself, and justice to the profession to which I am proud to belong.





LECTURE X.

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THE NECESSITY  
OF  
EDUCATION  
IN A  
REPUBLICAN GOVERNMENT.

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BY HORACE MANN.

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THE common arguments in favor of Education have been so often repeated, that, in rising to address you on this subject, I feel like appealing to your own judgment and good sense to bear testimony to its worth, rather than attempting to make your convictions firmer, or your feelings stronger, by any attestations of mine.

I hardly need to say, that by the word *Education*, I mean much more than an ability to read, write, and keep common accounts. I comprehend, under this noble word, such a training of the body as shall build it up with robustness and vigor,—at once protecting it from disease, and enabling it to act, *formatively*, upon the crude substances of nature,—to turn a wilderness into cultivated fields, forests into ships, or quarries and clay-pits into villages and cities. I mean also to include such a cultivation of

the intellect as shall enable it to discover those permanent and mighty laws which pervade all parts of the created universe, whether natural or spiritual. This is necessary, because if we act in obedience to these laws, all the resistless forces of Nature become our auxiliaries and cheer us on to certain prosperity and triumph; but, if we act in contravention or defiance of these laws, then Nature resists, thwarts, baffles us; and, in the end, it is just as certain that she will overwhelm us with ruin, as it is that God is stronger than man. And, finally, by the term Education, I mean such a culture of our moral affections and religious susceptibilities, as, in the course of Nature and Providence, shall lead to a subjection or conformity of all our appetites, propensities and sentiments, to the will of Heaven.

My friends, is it not manifest to us all, that no individual, unless he has some acquaintance with the lower forms of education, can superintend even the coarsest and most common interests of life, without daily error and daily shame? The general utility of knowledge, also, and the higher and more enduring satisfactions of the intellect, resulting from the discovery and contemplation of those truths with which the material and the spiritual universe are alike filled, impart to this subject a true dignity and a sublime elevation. But, in its office of attempering feelings which otherwise would blast or consume us;—in its authority to say to the clamorous propensities of our nature, ‘Peace, be still;’—in its auxiliary power to fit us for the endearments of domestic, for the duties of social and for the sanctity of immortal life;—in its two-fold office of enhancing the enjoyment which each one of us may feel in the virtue and happiness of all others, and of increasing

the virtue and happiness of all others, to make a larger fund for common enjoyment ;—in these high and sacred prerogatives, the cause of education lays claim to our mind and heart and strength, as one of the most efficient instruments prepared by the Creator for the welfare of his creatures and the honor of Himself.

Take any individual you please, separate him from the crowd of men, and look at him, apart and alone,—like some Robinson Crusoe in a far-off island of the ocean, without any human being around him, with no prospect of leaving any human being behind him,—and, even in such a solitude, how authoritative over his actions, how decisive of his contemplations and of his condition, are the instructions he received and the habits he formed in early life ! But now behold him as one of the tumultuous throng of men, observe the wide influences which he exerts upon others,—in the marts of business, in the resorts of pleasure, in the high places of official trust,—and reflect how any of all these influences, whether beneficent or malign, depend upon the education he has received, and you will have another gauge or standard whereby to estimate the importance of our theme. Look at him again, not as a being, coming, we know not whence, alighting for a brief residence upon this earth, and then making his exit through the door of the tomb, to be seen and heard of no more, and leaving no more impression upon society of his ways or works, than the sea-bird leaves upon the surface of the deep, when she stoops from the upper air, dips her breast for a moment in the wave, and then rises again to a viewless height ; but look at him in his relations to posterity, as the father of a family, as a member of a generation which sows those

seeds of virtue or vice, that, centuries hence, shall bear fruit or poison ;—look at him as a citizen in a free government, throwing his influence and his vote into one or the other of the scales where peace and war, glory and infamy are weighed ;—look at him in these relations, and consider how a virtuous or a vicious education tends to fit or to unfit him for them all, and you will catch one more glimpse of the importance of the subject now presented to your consideration. But if we ascend to a still higher point of vision, and, forgetting the earthly, personal career, and the wide sphere of social influences, and those acts of life which survive life,—fasten our eyes upon effects which education may throw forward into immortal destinies, it is then that we are awed, amazed, overpowered by the thought, that we have been created and placed in a system, where the soul's eternal flight may be made higher or lower by those who plume its tender wings and direct its early course. Such is the magnitude, the transcendence of this subject. In a philosophical view, beginning at what point we will, and following the most rigid connection and dependence of cause and effect, of antecedent and consequence, shall we find that education is intimately related to every good, and to every evil, which, as mortal or as immortal beings, we can desire or dread.

Were a being of an understanding mind and a benevolent heart, to see, for the first time, a peaceful babe reposing in its cradle, or on its mother's breast, and were he to be told, that that infant had been so constituted that every joint and organ in its whole frame might become the rendezvous of diseases and racking pains ; that such was its internal structure, that every nerve and fibre be-

neath its skin might be made to throb with a peculiar torture ; that, in the endless catalogue of human disasters, maladies, adversities or shame, there was scarcely one to which it would not be exposed ; that, in the whole criminal law of society, and in the more comprehensive and self-executing law of God, there was not a crime which its heart might not at some time will, and its hand perpetrate ; that, in the ghastly host of tragic passions,—Fear, Envy, Jealousy, Hate, Remorse, Despair,—there was not one which might not lacerate its soul, and bring down upon it an appropriate catastrophe ;—were the benevolent spectator whom I have supposed, to see this environment of ills underlying, surrounding, overhanging their feeble and unconscious victim, and, as it were, watching to dart forth and seize it, might he not be excused for wishing the newly-created spirit well back again into non-entity ?

But we cannot return to non-entity. We have no refuge in annihilation. Creative energy has been exerted. Our first attribute, the vehicle of all our other attributes,—is immortality. We are of indestructible mould. Do what else we please with our nature and our faculties, we cannot annihilate them. Go where we please, self-desertion is impossible. Banished, we may be, from the enjoyment of God, but never from his dominion. There is no right or power of expatriation. There is no neighboring universe to fly to. If we forswear allegiance, it is but an empty form, for the laws by which we are bound, do not only surround us, but are in us, and parts of us. Whatsoever other things may be possible, yet to break up or suspend this perpetuity of existence ; to elude this susceptibility to pains, at once indefinite in

number and indescribable in severity ; to silence conscience, or say that it shall not hold dominion over the soul ; to sink the past in oblivion ; or to alter any of the conditions on which heaven has made our bliss and our woe to depend,—these things are impossible. Personality has been given us, by which we must refer all sensations, emotions, resolves, to our conscious selves. Identity has been given us, by virtue of which, through whatever ages we exist, our whole being is made a unity. Now, whether curses or blessings, by these conditions of our nature we must stand ; for they are appointed to us, by a law higher than Fate,—by the law of God.

Were any one of this assembly to be shipwrecked upon a desert island,—“out of Humanity’s reach,”—would it not be his first act to ascend the nearest eminence and explore his position ? Would he not at once strive to descry the dangers and the resources by which he might be surrounded ? And, if reason, or even an enlightened self-love, constitutes any attribute of our nature, is it any the less our duty,—finding ourselves *to be*, and *to have entered* upon an interminable career of existence,—finding ourselves inwrought and organized with certain faculties and susceptibilities, so that we are necessitated to enjoy pleasure or to suffer pain, and so that neutrality between good and evil is impossible,—is it, I say, any the less our duty and our interest, to look around us and within us, and to see what, on the whole, we can best do with this nature and with these faculties, of which we find ourselves in possession ? Ought we not to inquire what mighty forces of Nature and of Providence are sweeping us along, and whither their currents are tending ? what parts of the great system in which we



are placed, can be accommodated to us, and to what parts we must accommodate ourselves?

Before such a theme I stand in awe. On which side shall its vastness be approached? Shall I speak of the principles on which an educational system for a State should be organized, or of the means and agencies by which it should be administered, in contrast with the absence of any fundamental plan? From the Capitol where the sovereign law is enacted, and whence it is promulgated, to the school district and the fireside, where the grand results of that law are to appear, in a more prosperous, more intelligent, more virtuous, and, of course, more happy generation of men and women, there is a vast intervening distance;—upon which one of the many links of the chain that binds these two extremes together, shall I expatiate?

I venture, my friends, at this time, to solicit your attention, while I attempt to lay before you some of the relations which we bear to the cause of Education, because we are the citizens of a Republic; and thence to deduce some of the reasons, which, under our political institutions, make the proper training of the rising generation, the highest earthly duty of the risen.

It is a truism, that free institutions multiply human energies. A chained body cannot do much harm; a chained mind can do as little. In a despotic government, the human faculties are benumbed and paralyzed; in a Republic, they glow with an intense life, and burst forth with uncontrollable impetuosity. In the former, they are circumscribed and straitened in their range of action; in the latter, they have "ample room and verge enough," and may rise to glory or plunge into ruin. Amidst universal ignorance, there cannot be such wrong notions

about right, as there may be in a community partially enlightened ; and false conclusions which have been reasoned out, are infinitely worse than blind impulses.

To demonstrate the necessity of Education in our government, I shall not attempt to derive my proofs from the history of other Republics. Such arguments are becoming stale. Besides, there are so many points of difference between our own political institutions, and those of any other government calling itself free, which has ever existed, that the objector perpetually eludes or denies the force of our reasoning, by showing some want of analogy between the cases presented.

I propose, therefore, on this occasion, not to adduce, as proofs, what has been true only in past times ; but what is true, at the present time, and must always continue to be true. I shall rely, not on precedents, but on the nature of things ; and draw my arguments less from history, than from humanity.

Now it is undeniable that, with the possession of certain higher faculties,—common to all mankind,—whose proper cultivation will bear us upward to hitherto undiscovered regions of prosperity and glory, we possess, also, certain lower faculties or propensities,—equally common,—whose improper indulgence leads, inevitably, to tribulation and anguish and ruin. The propensities to which I refer, seem indispensable to our temporal existence, and, if restricted within proper limits, they are promotive of our enjoyment ; but, beyond those limits, they work dishonor and infatuation, madness and despair. As servants, they are indispensable ; as masters, they torture as well as tyrannize. Now despotic and arbitrary governments have dwarfed and crippled the powers of doing

evil, as much as the powers of doing good ; but a republican government, from the very fact of its freedom, un-reins their speed, and lets loose their strength. It is justly alleged against despotisms, that they fetter, mutilate, almost extinguish the noblest powers of the human soul ; but there is a *per contra* to this, for which we have not given them credit ;—they circumscribe the ability to do the greatest evil, as well as to do the greatest good.

My proposition, therefore, is simply this :—If republican institutions do wake up unexampled energies in the whole mass of a people, and give them implements of unexampled power wherewith to work out their will ; then, these same institutions ought also to confer upon that people unexampled wisdom and rectitude. If these institutions give greater scope and impulse to the lower order of faculties belonging to the human mind, then, they must also give more authoritative control, and more skilful guidance to the higher ones. If they multiply temptations, they must fortify against them. If they quicken the activity and enlarge the sphere of the appetites and passions, they must, at least in an equal ratio, establish the authority and extend the jurisdiction of reason and conscience. In a word, we must not add to the impulsive, without also adding to the regulating forces.

If we maintain institutions, which bring us within the action of new and unheard of powers, without taking any corresponding measures for the government of those powers, we shall perish by the very instruments prepared for our happiness.

The truth has been so often asserted, that there is no security for a republic but in morality and intelligence, that a repetition of it seems hardly in good taste. But all

permanent blessings being founded on permanent truths, a continued observance of the truth is the condition of a continued enjoyment of the blessing. I know we are often admonished that, without intelligence and virtue, as a chart and a compass, to direct us in our untried political voyage, we shall perish in the first storm; but I venture to add that, without these qualities, we shall not wait for a storm,—we cannot weather a calm. If the sea is as smooth as glass we shall founder, for we are in a stone-boat. Unless these qualities pervade the general head and the general heart, not only will republican institutions vanish from amongst us, but the words *prosperity* and *happiness* will become obsolete. And all this may be affirmed, not from historical examples merely, but from the very constitution of our nature. We are created and brought into life with a set of innate, organic dispositions or propensities, which a free government rouses and invigorates, and which, if not bridled and tamed, by our actually seeing the eternal laws of justice, as plainly as we can see the sun in the heavens,—and by our actually feeling the sovereign sentiment of duty, as plainly as we feel the earth beneath our feet,—will hurry us forward into regions populous with every form of evil.

Divines, moralists, metaphysicians,—almost without exception,—regard the human being as exceedingly complex in his mental or spiritual constitution, as well as in his bodily organization;—they regard him as having a plurality of tendencies and affections, though brought together and embodied in one person. Hence, in all discussions or disquisitions respecting human nature, they analyze or assort it, into different classes of powers and faculties.

First, there is a conscience in every one of us, and a

sense of responsibility to God, which establish a moral relation between us and our Creator ; and which,—though we could call all the grandeur and the splendors of the universe our own, and were lulled and charmed by all its music and its beauty,—will forever banish all true repose from our bosom, unless our nature and our lives are supposed to be in harmony with the divine will. The object of these faculties is, their Infinite Creator ; and they never can be supremely happy unless they are tuned to perfect concord with every note in the celestial anthems of love and praise.

Then there is a set of faculties that we denominate social or sympathetic, among the most conspicuous of which is benevolence or philanthropy,—a sentiment which mysteriously makes our pulse throb, and our nerves shrink, at the pains or adversity of others, even though, at the same time, our own frame is whole, and our own fortunes gladdening. How beautiful and marvellous a thing it is, when embosomed in a happy family, surrounded by friends and children,—which even paradise had not,—that the history of idolatry in the far-off islands of the Pacific, or of the burning of Hindoo widows on the other side of the globe, amongst a people whom we never saw and never shall see, should pierce our hearts like a knife ! How glorious a quality of our nature it is, that the story of some old martyr or hero, who nobly upheld truth with life,—though his dust has now been blown about by the winds for twenty centuries,—should transport us with such feelings of admiration and ecstasy, that we long to have been he, and to have borne all his sufferings ; and we find ourselves involuntarily sublimed by so noble a passion, that the most ter-

rible form of death, if hallowed by a righteous cause, looks lovely as a bride to the bridegroom!

There are also the yearning, doting fondness of parents for children, of natural kindred for each other, and the passionate, yet pure affection of the sexes, which fit us for the duties and the endearments of domestic life. Even that vague general attachment to our fellow-beings, which binds men together in fraternal associations, is so strong, and is universally recognized as so natural, that we look upon hermits and solitaries as creatures half-mad or half-monstrous. The sphere of these sentiments or affections is around us and before us,—our family, neighborhood, country, kind, posterity.

And lastly, there is the strictly selfish part of our nature, which consists of a gang of animal appetites,—a horde of bandit propensities,—each one of which, by its own nature, is deaf to the voice of God, reckless of the welfare of men, blind, remorseless, atheistic ;—each one of the whole pack being supremely bent upon its own indulgence, and ready to barter earth and heaven to win it. We all have some pretty definite idea of beasts of prey and of birds of prey ; but not among the whelps of the lion's lair,—not among the young of the vulture's nest, are there any spoilers, at all comparable to those that may be trained from the appetites and propensities which each human being brings with him into the world. I am sorry not to be able to speak of this part of our common nature, in a more complimentary manner ; but to utter what facts will not warrant, would be to exchange the records of truth for a song of Delilah.

The first of these animal propensities is the simple want of food or nourishment. This appetite may be very



gentlemanly and well-behaved. There is nothing in it necessarily incompatible with decorum and good-breeding, or with the conscientious fulfilment of every private and every public duty. When duly indulged, and duly restrained, it furnishes the occasions,—around the family and the hospitable board,—for much of the pleasure of domestic, and the enjoyment of social existence. But thousands go through life, without ever having occasion to know or to think of its awful strength. Behold, what this appetite has actually and not unfrequently become, when, taking the ghastly form of Hunger in a besieged city, or amongst a famishing people, it forces the living to feed upon flesh torn from the limbs of the dead. Look at that open boat, weltering in mid ocean ; it holds the crew of a foundered vessel who have escaped with life only, but days and days have passed away, and no morsel of food or drop of drink has assuaged the tortures of hunger and thirst. At first, they wept together as suffering friends, then they prayed together as loving Christians ; but now friendship is extinct and prayer is choked, for hunger has grown to a cannibal, uttering horrible whispers, and proposing the fatal lot, by which the blood of one is to fill a bowl to be quaffed by the rest. Look again at the ravages of this appetite, in its other and more familiar, though not less appalling forms ;—look at its havoc of life in China, where thousands annually perish by opium ; in Turkey, where the pipe kills more than the bowstring ; and at the Golgothas of Intemperance, in Ireland,\* in Old England, and in New England. Now, the elements of this appetite are common to us all ; and

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\* At the time this was written, the redemption of Ireland by Father Matthew was only beginning.

no untempted mortal can tell what he would do, or would not do, if he were in the besieged city, or in the ocean-tost, provisionless boat. The sensations belonging to this appetite reside in the ends of a few nerves,—called by the anatomists, *papillæ*,—which are situated about the tongue and throat ; and yet, on the wants of this narrow spot, are founded the cultivation of myriads of orchards, vineyards and gardens, the tilling of grain-fields, prairie-like in extent, the scouring of forests for game, the dredging of seas, and the rearing of cattle upon a thousand hills. Granaries are heaped, cellars filled, vintages flow, to gratify this instinct for food. And what toils and perils, what European as well as African slavery, among the ignorant, and what epicurean science among the learned, have their origin and end in this one appetite. Once, cooling draughts from the fountain, and delicious fruits from the earth, sufficed for its demands. Now, whenever the banquet table is spread, there must be mountains of viands and freshets of wine. What absurdities as well as wickednesses, it tempts men, otherwise rational and religious, to commit. Have we not all seen instances of men, who will ask the blessing of heaven upon the bounties wherewith a paternal Providence has spread their daily board,—who will pray that their bodies may be nourished and strengthened for usefulness, by partaking of its supplies ; and will then sit down and almost kill themselves by indulgence ! It is as impossible to satisfy the refinements, as to satiate the grossness of this appetite. The Roman, Apicius, by his gold, provided a dish for his table composed of thousands of nightingales' tongues ; a despot, by his power, distils the happiness of a thousand slaves, to make one delicious

drop for his palate. This appetite, then, though consisting of only a few sensations about the mouth and throat, is a crucible in which the treasures of the world may be dissolved. Behold the epicure and the inebriate,—men who affect a lofty indignation, if you question that they are rational beings ;—see them bartering friends, family, and fame, body, soul and estate,—to gratify a space not more than two inches square in the inside of the mouth ! Do we not need some new form of expression, some single word, where we can condense, into one monosyllable, the meaning of ten thousand fools !

Take another of these animal wants,—that of clothing. How insignificant it seems, and yet of what excesses it is capable ! What sacrifices it demands ; what follies and crimes it suborns us to commit ! Compare the first fig-leaf suit with the monthly publication of London and Parisian fashions ! Our first parents began with a vegetable, pea-green wardrobe, plucked from the nearest tree ; and were their own dress-makers. Now, how many fields are tilled for linen and cotton and silks ; how many races of animals are domesticated, or are hunted under the line, around the poles, in ocean or in air, that their coverings may supply the materials of ours ! How many ships plough the ocean to fetch and carry ; what ponderous machinery rolls ; how many warehouses burst with an opulence of merchandise,—all having ultimate reference to this demand for covering ! Nor is there any assignable limit to the refinements and the expenditures, to the frauds and the cruelties, which may grow on this stock. The demands of this propensity, like those of the former, if suffered to go onward unrestrained, increase to infinity. The Austrian, Prince Esterhazy, lately vis-

ited the different courts of Europe, dressed in a coat which cost five hundred thousand dollars ; and it cost him from five hundred to a thousand dollars, every time he put it on. Yet, undoubtedly, if he had not thought himself sadly stinted in his means, he would have had a better coat, and underclothes to match !

Nor is this all which is founded upon the sensations of the skin, when the thermometer is much below, or much above sixty-five degrees. Shelter must be had ; and how much marble and granite rises from the quarry ; what masses of clay are shaped and hardened into bricks ; how many majestic forests start from their stations, and move afield, to be built up into villages and cities and temples, for the habitations of men ! And, notwithstanding all that has been done under the promptings of this appetite, who, if his wishes could execute themselves, would remain satisfied with the house he lives in, the temple he worships in, or the tomb in which he expects to sleep ?

Again ; there are seasons of the year when vegetable life fails, when the corn and the vine cease to luxuriate in the fields, and the orchards no longer bend with fruitage. There is also the season of infancy, when, though bountiful nature should scatter her richest productions spontaneously around us, we could not reach out our hands to gather them ; and again, there is the season of old age with its attendant infirmities, when our exhausted frame can no longer procure the necessities of existence. Now, that in summer we may provide for winter,—that during the vigor of manhood we may lay up provisions for the imbecility of our old age, and for the helplessness of children, we have been endued, by our Maker, with an instinct of acquisition, of accumulation ;—or, with a

desire, as we familiarly express it, to lay up something for a rainy day. Thus a disposition, or mental preadaptation, was given us, before birth, for these necessities which were to arise after it, just as our eye was fitted for the light to shine through, before it was born into this heaven-full of sunshine. Look at this blind instinct,—the love of gain,—as it manifests itself even in infancy. A child, at first, has no idea that there is any other owner of the universe but himself. Whatever pleases him, he forthwith appropriates. His wants are his title-deeds and bills of sale. He does not ask, in whose garden the fruit grew, or by whose diving the pearl was fished up. Carry him through a museum or a market, and he demands, in perfectly intelligible, though perhaps in inarticulate language, whatever arrests his fancy. His whole body of law, whether civil or criminal,—*omne ejus corpus juris*,—is in three words, “I want it.” If the candle pleases him, he demands the candle; if the rainbow and the stars please him, he demands the rainbow and the stars.

And how does this blind instinct overleap the objects for which it was given. Not content with competency in means, and disdaining the gradual accumulations of honest industry, it rises to insatiate avarice and rapacity. From the accursed thirst for gold have come the felon frauds of the market-place, and the more wicked pious frauds of the church, the robber’s blow, the burglar’s stealthy step around the midnight couch, the pirate’s murders, the rapine of cities, the plundering and captivity of nations. Even now, in self-styled Christian communities, are there not men who, under the sharp goadings of this impulse, equip vessels to cross the ocean,—not to carry the glad tidings of the gospel to heathen lands, but to descend

upon defenceless villages in a whirlwind of fire and ruin, to kidnap men, women and children, and to transport them through all the horrors of the midland passage, where their cries of agony and despair outvoice the storm, that the wretched victims may at last be sold into remorseless bondage, to wear chains, and to bequeath chains ;—and all this is perpetrated and suffered because a little gold can be transmuted, by such fiery alchemy, from human tears and blood ! Such is the inexorable power of cupidity, in self-styled Christian lands, in sight of the spires of God's temples pointing upward to heaven, which, if Truth had its appropriate emblems, would be reversed and point downward to hell.

Startle not, my friends, at these far-off enormities. Are there not monsters amongst ourselves who sell their own children into bondage for the money they can earn ? who coin not only the health of their own offspring, but their immortal capacities of intelligence and virtue, into pelf ? Are there not others who, at home, at the town meeting, and at the school meeting, win all the victories of ignorance by the cry of expense ? Are there not men amongst us, possessed of superfluous wealth, who will vote against a blackboard for a schoolroom, because the scantling costs a shilling and the paint sixpence !

Nay, do we not see men of lofty intellects, of minds formed to go leaping and bounding on from star to star in the firmament of knowledge, absorbed, sunk, in the low pursuit of gain ; and if, perchance, some of their superfluous coffers are lost, they go mad,—the fools ! and whine and mope in the wards of a lunatic hospital, because, forsooth, they must content themselves with a little less equipage, or upholstery, or millinery ! Such follies,



losses, crimes, prove to what infinite rapacity the instinct of acquisition may grow.

Again; there is the natural sentiment of self-respect, or self-appreciation ;—when existing in excess, it is popularly called self-esteem. This innate tendency imparts to every individual the feeling that, in and of himself, he is of some mark and consequence. This instinct was given us that it might act outwards and embody itself in all dignity and nobleness of conduct ; that it might preserve us, at all times, from whatever is beneath us or unworthy of us, though we were assured that no other being in the universe knew it, or ever would know it. For, when a man of true honor,—one who has formed a just estimate of the noble capacities with which God has endowed him, and of his own duty in using them,—when such a man is beset by a base temptation, and the tempter whispers,—“ You may yield, for in this solitude and impenetrable darkness, none can ever know your momentary lapse,”—his indignant reply is, “ But I shall know it myself !” Without this elevating and sustaining instinct, existing in some degree, and acting with some efficiency,—no man could ever hold himself erect, in the midst of so many millions of other men, each by the law of nature equal to himself. Without this, when surveying the sublimities of creation,—the cataract, the mountain, the ocean, the awful magnificence of the midnight heavens ; or when contemplating the power and perfections of Jehovah,—every one would lay his hand on his mouth and his mouth in the dust, never to rise again.

But this common propensity, like the others, is capable of infinite excesses. There are no bounds to its expansiveness and exorbitancy. When acting with intensity,

it seems to possess creative power. It changes emptiness into fulness. It not only reveals to its possessor a self-worthiness wholly invisible to others, but it so overflows with arrogance and pride as to confer an excellence upon every thing connected with or pertaining to itself. The tyrant Gessler mounted his cap upon a pole, and commanded his subjects to pay homage to it. It had imbibed a virtue from contact with his head, which made it of greater value than a nation of freemen. It is said of one of the present British dukes, that he will give a thousand pounds sterling, for a single worthless book, or for some ancient marble or pebble, provided it is known to be the only one of the kind in existence—a *unique*,—so that his pride can blow its trumpet in the ears of all mankind, and say, “In respect of this old book, or marble, or pebble, I have what no other man has, and am superior to the rest of the world.” Constable was so inflated with the supposed honor of being the publisher of Sir Walter Scott’s novels, that, in one of his paroxysms of pride, he exclaimed with an oath, “I am all but the author of the Waverly novels !” Yes, he came as near as type-setter ! It is this feeling which makes the organ-blower appropriate the plaudits bestowed upon the musician, and the hero’s valet mistake himself for his master. It is this propensity that makes a man proud of his ancestors, who were dead centuries before he was born ;—proud of garments which he never had wit enough to make, while he despises the tailor by whose superior skill they were prepared ;—and proud of owning a horse that can trot a mile in three minutes, though the credit of his speed belongs to the farmer who reared, and the jockey who trained, and even to the hostler who grooms him,

infinitely more than to the self-supposed gentleman who sits behind him in a gig, and just *lets him go!* Other selfish propensities play the strangest tricks, delusions, impostures, upon us, and make us knaves and fools ; but it is the inflation of pride, more than anything else, that swells us into an Infinite Sham.

I have time to mention but one more of this lower order of the human faculties,—*the Love of Approbation*. As a proper self-respect makes us discard and disdain all unworthy conduct even when alone ; so a rational desire to obtain the good-will of others, stimulates us to generosity, and magnanimity, and fortitude, in the performance of our social duties. It is a strong auxiliary motive,—useful as an impulse, though fatal as a guide. I think it is by the common consent of mankind, that the plaudits of the world rank as the third in the list of rewards for virtuous conduct,—coming next after the smiles of heaven and the approval of conscience. In this country, the bestowment of offices is the current coin in which the love of approbation pays and receives its debts. Offices, in the United States, would seem to be a *legal tender*, for nobody refuses them. But if this desire becomes rabid and inappeasable, if it grows from a subordinate instinct, into a domineering and tyrannical passion, it reverses the moral order, and places the applauses of men before the rewards of conscience and the approval of heaven. The victim of this usurper-passion will find the doctrines of revealed truth in the prevalent opinions of the community where he resides ; and the doctrines of political truth in the majority of votes at the last election,—modified by the chances of a change before the next. Under its influence, the intellect will plot any fraud, and

the tongue will utter any falsehood, in order to cajole and inveigle a majority of the people ; but should that majority fail, it will compel its poor slave to abandon the old party, and try its fortunes with a new one.

There are other original, innate propensities, which cannot properly be discussed, on an occasion like this. Their action, within certain limits, is necessary to self-preservation, and to the preservation of the race ; a description of their excesses would make every cheek pale and every heart faint.

Now there are a few general truths appertaining to this whole tribe of propensities. Though existing with different degrees of strength, in different individuals, yet they are common to the whole race. As they are necessary to self-preservation, their bestowment is almost universal, and we regard every man as so far unnatural, and suffering privation, who has not the elements of them all, mingled in his composition. As they are necessary to the continuance of the race, we must suppose, at least during the present constitution of human nature, that they will always exist ; and that all improvements in government, science, morals, faith, and other constituents of civilization, will produce their blessed effects, not by extirpating, but by controlling them, and by bringing them into subjection to the social and the divine law. As we have a moral nature to which God speaks, commanding us to love and obey his holy will ; as we have a social nature, which sends a circulating current of sympathy from our hearts, around through the hearts of children, friends, kindred and kind, mingling our pleasures and pains and their pleasures and pains in one common stream ; so by

these propensities, we are framed and articulated into this earthly life, and this frame of material things.

Again ; each one of these propensities is related to the *whole* of its class of objects, and not to any proportionate or definite quantity of them ;—just as the appetite of a wolf or a vulture is adapted or related to the blood of all lambs and all kids, and not merely to the blood of some particular number of lambs and kids. Each one of them, also, is blind to every thing but its own gratification ; it sallies forth,—if uncontrolled,—and seizes and riots upon its objects, regardless of all sacrifices, and defiant of all consequences. Each one of them is capacious as an abyss, is insatiable by indulgence, would consume whatever has been created for all, and then task Omnipotence to invent new pleasures for its pampering. Was any royal epicure ever satisfied, while a luxury was known to exist which he had not tasted ? To rear an architectural pile, or a mausoleum, vast as the unrestrained desires of man, the cedars of Lebanon would be too few ; nor could the materials of his wardrobe be supplied, though Damascus were his merchant. There have been thousands of men, all whose coffers were literally filled with gold ; but where the avaricious man in whose heart there was not room for more coffers ? The experiment was tried with Alexander of Macedon, whether the love of power could be satisfied by the conquest of all the nations of the earth. He did not weep, at first, for the conquest of the world ; it was only after conquering one world that he wept for the conquest of more. The ambition of Napoleon never burned with a fiercer flame, than when he escaped from his island-prison to remount the throne of France ; although it is said, that the wars,

in which he had then been engaged, had cost Europe five millions of human lives. But to slake his thirst for power and fame, the blood of five millions or of five hundred millions, the destruction of a continent or a constellation, of zone or zodiac, would have been nothing.

And thus it is with all the propensities. Their object must be obtained, whether, like Richard, they murder two male children, or, like Herod, all under two years of age. Pride built the pyramids and the Mexican mounds. Appetite led down the Goths and Vandals into the delicious south. Cupidity brought forth the slave-trade. And so of other enormities,—the Bastile, the Inquisition, the Harem,—they grow on the same stock. And though our bodies seem so small, and occupy so little space, yet, through these propensities, they are capable of sending out earth-o'erspreading branches, all clustering with abominations.

Our propensities have no affinity with reason or conscience. Did you ever hear two persons conversing about a third, whose ruin and infamy they agreed had come from the amount of his fortune, or from his facilities for indulgence, when, in the very breath in which they spoke of the resistless power of the temptation over him, they did not add that, in their own persons, they should be willing to run the same risk? This is the language of all the propensities. They are willing to run any risk, whether it be of health or of character, of time or of eternity. This explains how it is, that some men not wholly lost to virtue,—men who acknowledge their responsibility to God, and their obligations to conscience,—but in whom the propensities predominate and tyrannize ;—I say this explains how it is that such men,



when stung and maddened by the goadings of desire, wish themselves bereft of their better attributes, that they might give full career to passion, without remorse of conscience or dread of retribution. That human depravity which, hitherto, has made the history of our race, like the roll of the prophet, a record of lamentation and mourning and woe, has worked out through these propensities ; and, if the very substance and organization of human nature be not changed, by the eradication of these instincts, that depravity which is, to a greater or less degree, to make the future resemble the past, will pour out its agonies and its atrocities through the same channels !

Such, then, are our latent capabilities of evil,—all ready to be evolved, should the restraints of reason, conscience, religion, be removed. Here are millions of men, each with appetites capacious of infinity, and raging to be satisfied out of a supply of means too scanty for any one of them. Millions of coveting eyes are fastened on the same object,—millions of hands thrust out to seize it. What ravening, torturing, destroying, then, must ensue, if these hounds cannot be lashed back into their kennel. They must be governed ; they cannot be destroyed. Nature declares, that the germs, the embryos, of these incipient monsters, shall not be annihilated. She reproduces them with every human being that comes into the world. Nor, indeed, is it desirable, even if it were practicable, that they should be wholly expunged and razed out of our constitution. He who made us, knew our circumstances and necessities, and he has implanted them in our nature too deep for eradication. Besides, within their proper sphere, they confer an innocent, though a subordinate enjoyment. Certainly, we would not make

all men hermits and anchorites. Let us be just, even to the appetites. No man is the worse because he keenly relishes and enjoys the bountiful provisions which heaven has made for his food, his raiment, and his shelter. Indeed, why were these provisions ever made, if they are not to be enjoyed. Surely they are not superfluities and supernumeraries, cumbering a creation which would have been more perfect without them. Let them then be acquired and enjoyed, though always with moderation and temperance. Let the lover of wealth seek wealth by all honest means, and with earnestness, if he will ;—let him surround himself with the comforts and the embellishments of life, and add the pleasures of beauty to the pleasures of utility. Let every honorable man indulge a quick and sustaining confidence in his own worthiness, whenever disparaged or maligned ; and let him count upon the affections of his friends, and the benedictions of his race, as a part of the solid rewards of virtue. These, and kindred feelings, are not to be crushed, extinguished. Let them rouse themselves in presence of their objects, and rush out to seize them, and neigh, like a war-horse for the battle,—only let them know that they have a rider, to whose eye no mist can dim the severe line they are never to pass, and whose arm can bend every neck of them, like the twig of an osier.

But I must pass to the next topic for consideration,—the stimulus which, in this country, is applied to the propensities ; and the free, unbarred, unbounded career, which is here opened for their activity. In every other nation that has ever existed,—not even excepting Greece and Rome,—the mind of the masses has been obstructed

in its development. Amongst millions of men, only some half dozen of individuals,—often only a single individual,—have been able to pour out the lava of their passions, with full, volcanic force. These few men have made the Pharaohs, the Neros, the Napoleons of the race. The rest have usually been subjected to a systematic course of blinding, deafening, crippling. As an inevitable consequence of this, the minds of men have never yet put forth one thousandth part of their tremendous energies. Bad men have swarmed upon the earth, it is true, but they have been weak men. Another consequence is, that we, by deriving our impressions from history, have formed too low an estimate of the marvellous powers and capacities of the human being for evil as well as for good. The general estimate is altogether inadequate to what the common mind will be able to effect, when apt instruments are put into its hands, and the wide world is opened for its sphere of operations. Amongst savage nations, it is true, the will has been more free ; but there it has had none of the instruments of civilized life, wherewith to execute its purposes,—such, for instance, as the mechanic arts ; a highly cultivated language, with the general ability to read and write it ; fire-arms ; engineering ; steam ; the press, and the post-office ; and among civilized nations, though the means have been far more ample, yet the will has been broken or corrupted. Even the last generation, in this country,—the generation that moulded our institutions into their present form,—were born and educated under other institutions, and they brought into active life strong hereditary and traditional feelings of respect for established authority, merely because it was established,

—of veneration for law, simply because it was law,—and of deference both to secular and ecclesiastical rank, because they had been accustomed to revere rank. But scarcely any vestige of this reverence for the past, now remains. The momentum of hereditary opinion is spent. The generation of men now entering upon the stage of life,—the generation which is to occupy that stage for the next forty years,—will act out their desires more fully, more effectively, than any generation of men that has ever existed. Already, the tramp of this innumerable host is sounding in our ears. They are the men who will take counsel of their desires, and make it law. The condition of society is to be only an embodiment of their mighty will; and if greater care be not taken, than has ever heretofore been taken, to inform and regulate that will, it will inscribe its laws, all over the face of society, in such broad and terrific characters, that, not only whoever runs may read, but whoever reads will run. Should avarice and pride obtain the mastery, then will the humble and the poor be ground to dust beneath their chariot wheels; but, on the other hand, should besotting vices and false knowledge bear sway, then will every wealthy, and every educated, and every refined individual and family stand in the same relation to society, in which game stands to the sportsman!

In taking a survey of the race, we see that all of human character and conduct may be referred to two forces; the innate force of the mind acting outwards, and the force of outward things acting upon the mind. First, there is an internal, salient, elancing vigor of the mind, which, according to its state and condition, originates

thoughts, desires, impulses, and projects them outwards into words and deeds ; and secondly, there is the external force of circumstances, laws, traditions, customs, which besieges the mind, environs it, places a guard at all its outer gates, permits some of its desires and thoughts to issue forth, and to become words and actions, but forbids others to escape, beats them back, seals the lips that would utter them, smites off the arm that would perform them, punishes the soul that would send them forth by finding an avenue in every sense and in every nerve, through which to send up tormentors to destroy its hopes and lay waste its sanctuaries ; and finally, if all these means fail to subdue and silence the internal energy, then the external power dismisses the soul itself from the earth, by crushing the physical organization, which it inhabits. These two forces,—on the one hand, the mind trajecting itself forth, and seeking to do its will on whatever is external to itself,—and, on the other hand, whatever is external to the mind, modifying or resisting its movements,—these constitute the main action of the human drama. As a mathematician would express it, human conduct and character move in the diagonal of these two forces. Sometimes, indeed, both forces are coincident, sometimes antagonistic ; but it is useless to inquire which force has predominated, as no universal rule can be laid down respecting them. In despotisms, the external prevails ; in revolutions,—such as the French, for instance,—the internal. Why are the Chinese, for a hundred successive generations, transcripts and fac-similes of each other, as though the dead grandparent had come back again in the grandchild, and so round and round ? It is because, among the Chinese, this external force overlays

the growing faculties of the soul, and compels them, as they grow, to assume a prescribed shape. In that country the laws and customs are so inflexible, and the spirit of the people is so impotent, that their minds grow, as it were, into the hollow of a brazen envelope, whose walls are not removable nor penetrable ; and hence, all growth must follow the shape and the size of the concave surface. By their education, laws, and penalties, the minds of the people are made to grow into certain social, political, and religious forms, just as certainly, and on the same principle of force, as the feet of their beauties are made, by small inelastic shoes, to grow hoof-wise. In Russian Poland, a subject is as much debarred from touching certain topics, in the way of discussion, as from seizing on the jewels of the crown. The knout and the Siberian mines await the first outward expression of the transgressor. Hence the divinely-formed soul, created to admire, through intelligence, this glorious universe ; to go forth, through knowledge, into all lands and times ; to be identified, through sympathy, with all human fortunes ; to know its Maker, and its immortal destiny, is driven back at every door of egress, is darkened at every window where light could enter, and is chained to the vassal spot which gave it birth,—where the very earth, as well as its inhabitant, is blasted by the common curse of bondage. In Oriental and African despotisms, the mind of the millions grows, only as the trees of a noble forest could grow in the rocky depths of a cavern, without strength, or beauty, or healing balm,—in impurity and darkness, fed by poisonous exhalations from stagnant pools, all upward and outward expansion introverted by solid barriers, and forced back into unsightly forms. Thus has it always



fared with the faculties of the human soul when cavered in despotism. They have dwelt in intellectual, denser than subterranean, darkness. Their most tender, sweet, and hallowed emotions have been choked and blighted. The pure and sacred effusions of the heart have been converted into hatred of the good and idolatry of the base, for want of the light and the air of true freedom. The world can suffer no loss, equal to that spiritual loss which is occasioned by attempting to destroy, instead of regulating the energies of the mind.

Since the Christian epoch, great has been the change in Christian countries between the relative strength of the mind, acting outwards, and the strength of outward things, repulsing and stifling the action of the mind. Christianity established one conviction in the minds of thousands and tens of thousands, which other religions had established in the mind of here and there an individual only. This conviction was, that the future existence is infinitely more important than the present ;—the difference between the two being so great as to reduce all mere worldly distinctions to insignificance and nothing. Hence it might have been predicted from the beginning, that the human mind acting under the mighty stimulus of Christianity, would eventually triumph over despotism. The interests of despotism lie in this life ; those of Christianity, not only in this, but in the life to come. It was, therefore, mortality at one end of the lever, and immortality at the other. When one party contends for the blessings of life merely, while the other contends for blessings higher than life, the latter by a law of the moral nature, must ultimately prevail.

Although many of the ancients had a belief in a future

state of existence, yet it was apprehended by them so dimly, and its retributions were pressed home so feebly on their consciences, that the belief appears to have had but little effect upon the conduct of individuals, or the administration and policy of States ; and, for all practical purposes, it would hardly be too strong an expression to say, that immortality was *first revealed* by Christ. During the first three centuries of our era, the knowledge of this discovery,—so to call it,—was widely diffused among men. Then, by the union of Church and State, under Constantine, the civil power came in, and attempted to appropriate the benefits of the new discovery to itself, so that it might use divine motives for selfish purposes. And, had the throne and the priesthood sought to govern men by the motive of fear alone, they might have retained their ascendancy,—we cannot tell for what period of time. But they found a natural conscience in men, a sense of responsibility to duty, which they were so short-sighted as to enlist in their service ;—I say, short-sighted, for, when they aroused the sentiment of duty in the human soul, and used it as a means of securing obedience to themselves, they called up a power stronger than themselves. The ally was mightier than the chief that invoked its aid. Hence the uprisings, the rebellions of the people against regal and ecclesiastical power. Rulers attempted to subdue the people by persecutions, massacres, burnings, but in vain ; because, though they could kill men, they could not kill conscience. After a conflict of sixteen centuries, the victory has been achieved. Mind has triumphed over the quellers of mind,—the internal force over the external. When mankind shall be removed by time to such a distance that

they can see past events in their true proportions and relative magnitude, this struggle, between oppression on the one side, striving to keep the human mind in its prison-house, and to set an eternal seal upon the door ; and, on the other hand, the convulsive efforts of that mind to disenthral itself, and to utter its impatient thoughts ; and to form, and to abide by, its own convictions of truth,—this conflict, I say, will be the grand, central, conspicuous object, in the history of our era. The history of wars between rival dynasties, for the conquest or dismemberment of empires, will fade away, and be but dimly visible in the retrospect ; while this struggle between the soul and its enslavers, will stand far out in the foreground,—the towering, super-eminent figure, on the historic canvass.

It has not been in accustomed modes, nor with weapons of earthly temper only, that this warfare has been waged. As the energies of the soul, acting under the mighty impulses of a sense of duty and the prospect of an endless futurity, waxed stronger and stronger, tyrants forged new engines to subdue it. Their instruments have been the dungeons of a thousand Bastiles ; the Inquisition whose ministers were literally flames of fire ; devastations of whole provinces ; huntings of entire communities of men into the mountains, like timorous flocks ; massacres,—in one only of which, thirty thousand men and women were slaughtered at the ringing of a signal-bell ; and, after exhausting all the agonies of earth and time, they unvaulted the Bottomless Pit, and, suspending their victims over the abyss, they threatened to hurl them down into the arms of beckoning demons, impatient to begin their pastime of eternal torture. But, impassive to

annihilation ; though smitten down, yet, with recuperative energy, springing from its fall ; victorious over the sufferings of this world and the more formidable terrors of another,—the human soul, immortal, invulnerable, invincible, has at last unmanacled and emancipated itself. It has triumphed ; and here, in our age and in our land, it is now rising up before us, gigantic, majestic, lofty as an archangel, and, like an archangel, to be saved or lost by its obedience or its transgressions. Amongst ourselves it is, that this spirit is now walking forth, full of its new-found life, wantoning in freshly-discovered energies, surrounded by all the objects which can inflame its boundless appetites, and, as yet, too purblind, from the long darkness of its prison-house, to discern clearly between its blessing and its bane. That unconquerable force of the human soul, which all the arts and power of despotism,—which all the enginery borrowed from both worlds,—could not subdue, is here, amongst ourselves, to do its sovereign will.

Let us now turn for a moment to see what means and stimulants, our institutions have provided for the use of the mighty powers and passions they have unloosed. No apparatus so skilful was ever before devised. Instead of the slow and cumbrous machinery of former times, we have provided that which is quick-working and far-reaching, and which may be used for the destruction as easily as for the welfare of its possessors. Our institutions furnish as great facilities for wicked men, in all departments of wickedness, as phosphorus and lucifer matches furnish to the incendiary. What chemistry has done, in these preparations, over the old art of rubbing two sticks to-

gether, for the wretch who would fire your dwelling, our social partnerships have done for flagitious and unprincipled men. Through the right,—almost universal,—of suffrage, we have established a community of power ; and no proposition is more plain and self-evident, than that nothing but mere popular inclination lies between a community of power and a community in every thing else. And though, in the long-run, and when other things are equal, a righteous cause always has a decisive advantage over an evil one, yet, in the first onset between right and wrong, bad men possess one advantage over the good. They have double resources,—two armories. The arts of guilt are as welcome to them as the practices of justice. They can use poisoned weapons as well as those approved by the usages of war.

Again ; has it been sufficiently considered, that all which has been said,—and truly said,—of the excellence of our institutions, if administered by an upright people, must be reversed and read backwards, if administered by a corrupt one ? I am aware that some will be ready to say, “ we have been unwise and infatuated to confide all the constituents of our social and political welfare, to such irresponsible keeping.” But let me ask of such,—of what avail is their lamentation ? The irresistible movement in the diffusion of power is still progressive, not retrograde. Every year puts more of social strength into the hands of physical strength. The arithmetic of numbers is more and more excluding all estimate of moral forces, in the administration of government. And this, whether for good or for evil, will continue to be. Human beings cannot be remanded to the dungeons of imbecility, if they are to those of ignorance. The sun can

as easily be turned backwards in its course, as one particle of that power, which has been conferred upon the millions, can be again monopolized by the few. To discuss the question, therefore, whether our institutions are not too free, is, for all practical purposes, as vain as it would be to discuss the question whether, on the whole, it was a wise arrangement on the part of Divine Providence, that the American continent should ever have been created, or that Columbus should have discovered it. And let me ask further, have those who believe our institutions to be too free, and who, therefore, would go back to less liberal ones,—have they settled the question, how far back they will go? Will they go back to the dark ages, and recall an eclipse which lasted centuries long? or will they ascend a little higher for their models,—to a time when our ancestors wore undressed skins, and burrowed in holes of the earth? or will they strike at once for the institutions of Egypt, where, though the monkey was a god, there was still a sufficient distance between him and his human worshipper? But all such discussions are vain. The oak will as soon go back into the acorn, or the bird into its shell, as we return to the monarchical or aristocratic forms of by-gone ages.

Nor let it be forgotten, in contemplating our condition, that the human passions, as unfolded and invigorated by our institutions, are not only possessed of all the prerogatives, and equipped with all the implements of sovereignty; but that they are forever roused and spurred to the most vehement efforts. It is a law of the passions, that they exert strength in proportion to the causes which excite them,—a law which holds true in cases of sanity, as well as in the terrible strength of insanity. And with



what endless excitements are the passions of men here plied? With us, the Press is such a clarion, that it proclaims all the great movements of this great country, with a voice that sweeps over its whole surface, and comes back to us in echoes from its extremest borders. From the Atlantic to the Pacific, from the Lakes to the Gulf, men cheer, inflame, exasperate each other, as though they were neighbors in the same street. What the ear of Dionysius was to him, making report of every word uttered by friend or foe, our institutions have made this land to every citizen. It is a vast sounding gallery; and, from horizon to horizon, every shout of triumph and every cry of alarm are gathered up and rung in every man's dwelling. All objects which stimulate the passions of men, are made to pass before the eyes of all, as in a circling panorama. In very truth we are all hung upon the same electrical wire, and if the ignorant and the vicious get possession of the apparatus, the intelligent and the virtuous must take such shocks as the stupid or profligate experimenters may choose to administer.

Mark how the excitements which our institutions supply, have wrought upon the love of gain and the love of place. Vast speculations,—such as in other countries would require not only royal sanctions and charters, but the equipment of fleets, and princely outfits of gold and arms,—are here rushed into, on flash paper, by clerks and apprentices, not out of their time. What party can affirm that it is exempt from members who prize office, rather than the excellence that deserves it? *Where* can I be,—not *what* can I be,—is the question suggested to aspirants for fame. How many have their eyes fixed upon posts of honor and emolument which but one only can

fill. While few will be satisfied with occupying less than their portion of space in the public eye, thousands have marked out some great compartment of the sky for the blazonry of their names. And hence it is, that, wherever there is a signal of gain, or of power, the vultures of cupidity and of ambition darken the air. Young men launch into this tumultuous life years earlier than has ever been witnessed elsewhere. They seek to win those prizes without delay, which, according to nature's ordinances and appointments, are the rewards of a life of labor. Hence they find no leisure for studying the eternal principles of justice, veracity, equality, benevolence, and for applying them to the complicated affairs of men. What cares a young adventurer for the immutable laws of trade, when he has purchased a ticket in some lottery of speculation, from which he expects to draw a fortune? Out of such an unbridled, unchastened love of gain, whether it traffics in townships of land or in twopenny toys, do we not know beforehand, there will come infinite falsehoods, knavery and bankruptcy? Let this state of things continue, and he will be a happy man who dares to say of any article of food or of apparel which he eats or wears, that it has not, at some period of its preparation, or in some of its transfers, been contaminated by fraud. And what a state of society would it argue, in other respects, if the people at large should ever become indifferent to the question, whether fraud be, or be not, inwoven into the texture, and kneaded into the substance of what they daily consume,—whether what they eat or drink or wear, be not an embodiment of the spirit of lies?

So the inordinate love of office will present the spec-

tacle of gladiatorial contests,—of men struggling for station as for life,—and using against each other the poisoned weapons of calumny and vituperation ;—while the abiding welfare, the true greatness and prosperity of the people will be like the soil of some neutral Flanders, over which the hostile bands of partisans will march and countermarch, and convert it into battlefields,—so that, whichever side may triumph, the people will be ruined. And even after one cause, or one party has prevailed, the conquered land will not be wide enough to settle a tithe of the conquerors upon. Hence must come new rallyings, new banners must be unfurled, and the repose of the land again broken by the convulsions of party strife. Hence too, the death-grapple, between the defenders of institutions which ought to be abolished, and the assailants of institutions which ought to be preserved. Laocoön cries, “ My life and my children are mine.” The hissing and enwreathing serpents respond, “ They are ours.” If each party espouses and supports whatever is wrong on its own side, because such a course is deemed necessary to union and strength ; and denounces whatever is right in the plans of its antagonists, because such are the approved tactics of opposition ; if each party sounds the loudest alarms, when the most trivial danger from its opponents is apprehended, and sings the gentlest lullabies over perils of its own producing, can seer or prophet foretell but one catastrophe ?

Again ; we hear good men, every day, bemoaning the *Ignorance* of certain portions of our country, and of individuals in all parts of it. The use often made of the elective franchise, the crude, unphilosophical notions, sometimes advanced in our legislative halls on questions

of political economy, the erroneous views entertained by portions of the people, respecting the relation between representative and constituent, and the revolutionary ideas of others in regard to the structure of civil society,—these are cited as specimens and proofs of the *ignorance* that abounds amongst us. No greater delusion can blind us. This much-lamented ignorance, in the cases supposed, is a phantom, a spectre. The outcry against it is a false alarm, diverting attention from a real to an imaginary danger. Ignorance is not the cause of the evils referred to. With exceptions comparatively few, we have but two classes of ignorant persons amongst us, and they are harmless. Infants and idiots are ignorant ; few others are so. Those whom we are accustomed to call ignorant are full of false notions, as much worse than ignorance as wisdom is better. A merely ignorant man has no skill in adapting means to ends, whereby to jeopard the welfare of great interests or great numbers. Ignorance is blankness ; or, at most, a lifeless, inert mass, which can, indeed, be moved and placed where you please, but will stay where it is placed. In Europe, there are multitudes of ignorant men,—men, into whose minds, no idea ever entered, respecting the duties of society or of government, or the conditions of human prosperity. They, like their work-fellows, the cattle, are obedient to their masters ; and the range of their ideas on political or social questions, is hardly more extensive than that of the brutes. But with our institutions, this state of things, to any great extent, is impossible. The very atmosphere we breathe is freighted with the ideas of property, of acquisition and transmission ; of wages, labor and capital ; of political and social rights ; of the appointment to, and tenure of offices ;

of the reciprocal relations between of the great departments of government—executive, legislative, and judicial. Every native-born child amongst us, imbibes notions, either false or true, on these subjects. Let these notions be false ; let an individual grow up, with false ideas of his own nature and destiny as an immortal being, with false views respecting what government, laws, customs, should be ; with no knowledge of the works, or the opinions of those great men who framed our government, and adjusted its various parts to each other ;—and when such an individual is invested with the political rights of citizenship, with power to give an authoritative voice and vote upon the affairs of his country, he will look upon all existing things as rubbish which it is his duty to sweep away, that he may have room for the erection of other structures, planned after the model of his own false ideas. No man that ever lived could, by mere intuition or instinct, form just opinions upon a thousand questions, pertaining to civil society, to its jurisprudence, its local, national and international duties. Many truths, vital to the welfare of the people, differ, in their reality, as much from the appearances which they present to uninstructed minds, as the apparent size of the sun differs from its real size, which in truth is so many thousand times larger than the earth, while to the untaught eye it appears to be so many thousand times smaller. And if the human propensities are here to manifest themselves through the enlarged means of false knowledge which our institutions, unaided by special instruction, will furnish ; if they are to possess all the instruments and furtherances which our doctrine of political equality confers ; then the result must be, a power to do evil almost infinitely greater than

ever existed before, instigated by impulses proportionately strong. Hence our dangers are to be, not those of ignorance which would be comparatively tolerable, but those of false knowledge, which transcend the powers of mortal imagination to portray. Would you appreciate the amazing difference between ignorance and false knowledge, look at France, before and during her great revolution. Before the revolution, her people were merely ignorant ; during the revolution, they acted under the lights of false knowledge. An idiot is ignorant, and does little harm ; a maniac has false ideas, and destroys, burns and murders.

Looking again at the nature of our institutions, we find that it is not the material or corporeal interests of man alone, that are here decided by the common voice ;—such, for instance, as those pertaining to finance, revenue, the adjustment of the great economical interests of society, the rival claims between agriculture, commerce and manufactures, the partition and distribution of legislative, judicial and executive powers, with a long catalogue of others of a kindred nature ;—but also those more solemn questions which pervade the innermost sanctuary of domestic life, and, for worship or for sacrilege, enter the Holy of Holies in the ark of society ;—these also are submitted to the general arbitrament. The haughty lordling, whose heart never felt one throb for the welfare of mankind, gives vote and verdict on the extent of popular rights ; the libertine and debauchee give vote and verdict on the sanctity of the marriage covenant ; the atheist on the definition of blasphemy. Nor is this great people invited merely to speculate, and frame abstract theories, on these momentous themes ; to make picture models, on



paper, in their closets ; they are not invited to sketch Republics of Fancy only, but they are commissioned to make Republics of Fact ; and in such Republics as they please to make, others, perforce, must please to live. If I do not like my minister, or my parish, I can *sign off*, (as we term it,) and connect myself with another ; if I do not like my town, I can move out of it ; but where shall a man sign to, or move to, out of a bad world ? Nor do our people hold these powers, as an ornament merely, as some ostensible but useless badge of Freedom ; but they keep them as instruments for use, and sometimes wield them as weapons of revenge. So closely indeed are we inwoven in the same web of fate, that a vote given on the banks of the Missouri or Arkansas, may shake every plantation and warehouse on the Atlantic, and, reaching seaward, overtake and baffle enterprise, into whatever ocean it may have penetrated.

Such, then, is our condition. The minds that are to regulate all things and govern all things, in this country, are innately strong ; they are intensely stimulated ; they are supplied with the most formidable artillery of means ; and each one is authorized to form its own working-plan, its own ground-scheme, according to which, when the social edifice has been taken to pieces, it is to be reconstructed ; some, for going back a thousand or two thousand years for their model ; others, for introducing what they consider the millennium, at once, by force of law, or by force without law.

And now, my friends, I ask, with the deepest anxiety, what institutions exist amongst us, which at once possess the power and are administered with the efficiency, re-

quisite to save us from the dangers that spring up in our own bosoms? That the propensities, which each generation brings into the world, possess terrific power, and are capable of inflicting the completest ruin, none can deny. Nor will it be questioned that, amongst us, they have an open career, and a command of means, such as never before coëxisted. What antagonist power have we provided against them? By what exorcism can we lay the spirits we have raised? Once, brute force, directed by a few men, trampled upon the many. Here, the many are the possessors of that very force, and have almost abolished its use as a means of government. The French *gendarmarie*, the British horse-guards, the dreadful punishment of the Siberian mines, will never be copied here. Should the government resort to a standing army, that army would consist of the very forces they dread, organized, equipped and officered. Can laws save us? With us, the very idea of legislation is reversed. Once, the law prescribed the actions and shaped the wills of the multitude; here, the wills of the multitude prescribe and shape the law. With us, legislators study the will of the multitude, just as natural philosophers study a volcano;—not with any expectation of doing aught to the volcano, but to see what the volcano is about to do to them. While the law was clothed with majesty and power, and the mind of the multitude was weak, then, as in all cases of a conflict between unequal forces, the law prevailed. But now, when the law is weak, and the passions of the multitude have gathered irresistible strength, it is fallacious and insane to look for security in the moral force of the law. As well might the man who has erected his dwelling upon the verge of a cliff overhanging the deep,

when the equilibrium of the atmosphere is destroyed, and the elements are on fire, and every billow is excavating his foundations, expect to still the tempest by reading the Riot-act. Government and law, which ought to be the allies of justice and the everlasting foes of violence and wrong, will here be moulded into the similitude of the public mind, and will answer to it, as, in water, face answereth to face.

But, if arms themselves would be beaten in such a contest, if those who should propose the renewal of ancient severities in punishment, would themselves be punished, have we not some other resource for the security of moderation and self-denial, and for the supremacy of order and law? Have not the scholars who adorn the halls of learning, and woo almost a hallowed serenity to dwell in their academic shades,—have they not, amongst all the languages which they speak, some tongue by which they can charm and pacify the mighty spirits we have evoked into being? Alas! while scholars and academists are earnestly debating such questions, as whether the *name* of error, shall or shall not be spelled with the letter *u*, the *soul* of error becomes incarnate, and starts up, as from the earth, myriad-formed and ubiquitous, and stands by the side of every man, and whispers transgression into his ear, and, like the first Tempter, entices him to pluck the beautiful, but fatal fruit of some forbidden tree. Our ancestors seem to have had great faith that the alumni of our colleges would diffuse a higher order of intelligence through the whole mass of the people, and would imbue them with a love of sobriety and a reverence for justice. But either the heaven has lost its virtue, or the lump has

become too large ; for, surely, in our day, the mass is not all leavened.

I speak with reverence of the labors of another profession, in their sacred calling. No other country in the world has ever been blessed with a body of clergymen, so learned, so faithful, so devout as ours. But by traditional custom, by the ingrained habits of the people, the efforts of the clergy are mainly expended upon those who have passed the forming state ;—upon adults, whose characters, as we are accustomed to express it, have become *fixed*, which being interpreted, means, that they have passed from fluid into flint. Look at the ablest pastor, in the midst of an adult congregation whose early education has been neglected. Though he be consumed of zeal, and ready to die of toil, in their behalf, yet I seem to see him, expending his strength and his years amongst them, like one solitary arborist working, single-handed and alone, in a wide forest, where there are hundreds of stooping and contorted trees, and he, striving with tackle and guy-ropes to undouble their convolutions, and to straighten the flexures in trunks whose fibres curled as they grew ; and, with his naked hand, to coax out gnarls and nodosities hard enough to glance off lightning ;—when, could he have guided and trained them while yet they were tender shoots and young saplings, he could have shaped them into beauty, a hundred in a day.

But perhaps others may look for security to the public Press, which has now taken its place amongst the organized forces of modern civilization. Probably its political department supplies more than half the reading of the mass of our people. But, bating the point, whether, in times of public excitement, when the sobriety and

thoughtfulness of wisdom, when severe and exact truth are, more than ever else, necessary,—whether, at such times, the press is not itself liable to be inflamed by the heats it should allay, and to be perverted by the obliquities it should rectify ;—bating this point, it is still obvious that its principal efforts are expended upon one department only of all our social duties. The very existence of the newspaper press, for any useful purpose, presupposes that the people are already supplied with the elements of knowledge and inspired with the love of right ; and are therefore prepared to decide, with intelligence and honesty, those complicated and conflicting claims, which the tide of events is constantly presenting, and which, by the myriad messengers of the press, are carried to every man's fireside for his adjudication. For, of what value is it, that we have the most wisely-framed government on earth ; to what end is it, that the wisest schemes which a philanthropic statesmanship can devise, are propounded to the people, if this people has not the intelligence to understand, or the integrity to espouse them ? Each of two things is equally necessary to our political prosperity ; namely, just principles of government and administration, on one side, and a people able to understand and resolute to uphold them, on the other. Of what use is the most exquisite music ever composed by the greatest masters of the art, until you have orchestra or choir that can perform the pieces ? Pupils must thoroughly master the vocal elements, musical language must be learned, voices must be long and severely trained, or the divinest compositions of Haydn or Mozart would only set the teeth of an auditory on edge. And so must it be with our government and laws ;

—the best will be useless, unless we have a people who will appreciate and uphold them.

Again, then, I ask, with unmitigated anxiety, what institutions we now possess, that can furnish defence or barrier against the action of those propensities, which each generation brings into the world as a part of its being ; and which our institutions foster and stimulate into unparalleled activity and vigor ? Can any Christian man believe, that God has so constituted and so governs the human race, that it is always and necessarily to be suicidal of its earthly welfare ? No ! the thought is impious. The same Almighty power which implants in our nature, the germs of these terrible propensities, has endowed us also, with reason and conscience and a sense of responsibility to Him ; and, in his providence, he has opened a way by which these nobler faculties can be elevated into dominion and supremacy over the appetites and passions. But if this is ever done, it must be mainly done, during the docile and teachable years of childhood. I repeat it, my friends, *if this is ever done, it must be mainly done, during the docile and teachable years of childhood.* Wretched, incorrigible, demoniac, as any human being may ever have become, there was a time when he took the first step in error and in crime ; when, for the first time, he just nodded to his fall, on the brink of ruin. Then, ere he was irrecoverably lost, ere he plunged into the abyss of infamy and guilt, he might have been recalled, as it were, by the waving of the hand. Fathers, mothers, patriots, Christians ! it is this very hour of peril through which our children are now passing. They know it not, but we know it ; and where the knowledge is, there rests the responsibility. Society is responsible ;—



not society considered as an abstraction, but society as it consists of living members, which members we are. Clergymen are responsible ;—all men who have enjoyed the opportunities of a higher education in colleges and universities are responsible, for they can convert their means, whether of time or of talent, into instruments for elevating the masses of the people. The conductors of the public press are responsible, for they have daily access to the public ear, and can infuse just notions of this high duty into the public mind. Legislators and rulers are responsible. In our country, and in our times, no man is worthy the honored name of a statesman, who does not include the highest practicable education of the people, in all his plans of administration. He may have eloquence, he may have a knowledge of all history, diplomacy, jurisprudence ; and by these he might claim the elevated rank of a statesman in other countries ; but, unless he speaks, plans, labors, at all times and in all places, for the culture and edification of the whole people, he is not, he cannot be, an American statesman.

If this dread responsibility for the fate of our children be disregarded, how, when called upon, in the great eventful day, to give an account of the manner in which our earthly duties have been discharged, can we expect to escape the condemnation, “ Inasmuch as ye have not done it to one of the least of these, ye have not done it unto me.”